



NEWSLETTER - MARCH 2016

DATABASE: 6337 WHANAU CARERS

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

From the National Office

GRG 2016 Research

In March to May 2016 we are conducting a significant survey focused on the social and economic issues impacting on the thousands of full-time grandparent and whanau caregivers who are raising some of our most vulnerable children in New Zealand today. What we learn from this important study will help us to promote positive changes and improvements to the support and services they rely on and need daily in their lives. We are grateful for the support for this study from the Lotteries Grants Board, the Canterbury University Human Ethics Committee and Dr Liz Gordon and her team at Pukeko Research Limited.

The Survey is online and can also be accessed directly through our website at www.grg.org.nz. It will be open until mid-May 2016 for all full-time New Zealand grandparent and whanau/kin caregivers to take part and give their voice to the thousands of you raising grand/kin children. It takes about an hour to complete and if you access the Survey directly through our website it must be completed in one sitting, so make sure you give yourself the time and have a cuppa at

the ready while you do it!

If you have raised your grand/kin children in the past but they have flown the coop or



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are no longer in your care, the Survey has the option for you to also participate and share your experiences and reflections as caregivers.

To all of you who are full-time grandparent and whanau/kin caregivers, you are our heroes...let your stories be told and let your voices be heard!



Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Winner



Active Grandparents and Grandchildren/ Mokopuna Program Overview

Sports Manawatu have agreed to continue to coordinate and manage this amazing program for our GRG members.

GRG Palmerston North, have the opportunity to have this program sponsored for us, at zero cost. The program is non-competitive and a great deal of fun. Last year we saw many benefits for ourselves and our young ones. There were some pretty special moments including: the moment a young one rode a bike for the first time (after many “fall offs and so much determination), the young lad who was so proud of many of his achievements and asked that we take note of them too J.

Often our young ones don't participate, so it was special to see the changes that took place last year for many of them. This is a valuable program for our members and it is worth coming along to have a look and to decide if it is for you, and your young ones. Everyone is welcome.

Teenagers are also welcome - we are looking for a few teens to support the program Coordinator each week. This is a great way to learn about fitness and health and have some hands on experience.

Sport Manawatu also run the Active Teens program, at zero cost. This is a brilliant opportunity for teens to experience what this community can offer them in terms of sporting and fitness activities – hands on experience!!!

Starting Date/Venue: Thursday 24 March 2016 – 3.45pm, at Somerset School 45 Somerset Crescent, Highbury.

Aims:

- to bring grandparents/kin carers and our young people together, in a program that promotes healthy living, fitness, and friendship
- to provide a program that encourages support between participants, and support of their

grandchildren/mokopuna

- to present a program that is fun and challenging
- to introduce new activities to families/whanau and to encourage participation and support for each other in those activities
- to support our young ones, and recognise and honour any special needs that they may have
- to provide a safe and respectful environment, for our members and their young ones, in which they can fully participate in new activities (“full participation” means at a level that works for us individually)

Benefits

The program provides the opportunity for GRG members to:

- have fun in a relaxed environment, in which the needs of grandparents/kin carers and their young ones are acknowledged, respected and supported
- nurture our young ones to grow in confidence and strength
- meet other grandparent/kin carer families/whanau, build friendships
- add more knowledge on health and exercise to our (already abundant) kete of wisdom
- belong to a group that is positive and proactive in having their needs met
- learn about what our community has to offer

Registration will take place at Somerset School on the 24th March and we look forward to seeing as many there as possible. The program runs for 12 months, and there are no costs involved.

If transport is needed let us know and we may be able to match people in the same area to assist. Either phone or text Martha on 0272662653.

The Cupboard of Dreams

High on the top shelf in the linen cupboard are new beginnings for three children and the two grandchildren we raised. School books to be precise. Started some 40 years ago,

They languish there in all their glory, hopes and dreams of a new school year, new friends and what was to come. Childish writing contained within those pages, memories of another time.



As one glances up at that ever growing pile, they are testament to their age. At the very bottom, they are covered in brown paper. As we move up the pile we find wallpaper covered books, then colourful wrapping paper. The dog eared corners tell me that they were not durable. Then came the latest thing: sticky plastic coated book coverings, in the grand children's era.

Now I ask, why does one have to cover books in the hottest month of the year? There is no room for errors with this sticky stuff either. Armed with scissors, ruler and windows wide open, the task begins. With determination etched on one's brow, I begin. Why is it, when you start these tasks the children are needing something?

Beads of perspiration drip down by face as I cut, place, stick and press. Who knew two girls needed so many books? First book goes perfectly. The same cannot be said for the rest, as the task moves on and the day heats up, the pile that needed covering is shrinking to a manageable lot. Well, sort of. The final ones are beginning to resemble my poor old face, covered in wrinkles and no matter how hard I ran that ruler over that plastic covering, I could not get them out.

I apologized to the youngest one who had the misfortune of having hers done last. 'Don't worry nan', she said, 'when I am bored in class I try to press them all out.' Oh, and I thought they went to school to learn!

One day, I shall climb high into that cupboard and bring them down, split them up for each child and hand back their thoughts and new beginnings, after all they are theirs. And when the grand girl's reach Intermediate, I shall celebrate a new beginning for me. No more covering of school books, wahoo.

Di writes a blog for [Kiwi Families.co.nz](http://KiwiFamilies.co.nz)

Verbal Abuse

It is with great regret we even have to bring this up. Lately there has been a spate of abuse hurled over the phone to some members of staff, Field Officers, volunteer Coordinators and the contracted agency conducting our research. This is simply not acceptable. These people are here to help you. Please do not shoot the messenger. For examples, with issues about Work and Income, our advocate can only assist you within the parameters of the law. They cannot bend it to suit your needs. The research company has been contracted by the GRG Trust to conduct our research with questions designed to elicit important information we need to promote positive changes to policy and practice to benefit you all. Many of our caregivers had input into the questions and it has been well thought out and tested.

Respite Camps

Why KidzaCool Adventures?

Quality support and respite for kin/whanau/foster carers. **APPLY NOW!**

Our KidzaCool Adventures programme gives children the opportunity to play and relax in a fun, safe and sociable environment while kin/whanau/foster carers work, relax or catch up with friends and family. We like to think we offer kin/whanau/foster carers peace of mind while offering children, aged 5-12, a piece of the action!! The programme is a free service for caregivers.

Our Programme

Adventure and Fun!

The programmes are held over five days for 3 weeks a year - one each in January, April and July during the school term holidays. The Programme offers a balance of sports, art and craft activities and outdoor adventures, tailoring each session to suit the age and ability of the children. We take full advantage of our regional sites great facilities, running our programme with safety as a top priority to ensure care-giver peace of mind.

The children are assigned to groups of six or seven with staff members who support them throughout the stay. Our staff have been carefully selected and trained to help them bring out the best in children!

How to Apply

To apply, you must have had a child in your care for 12 months or more and you must not be the biological or adoptive parents of the child.

Applications generally close four weeks prior to the holiday programme start date. Those whom we cannot place at the time will be held on our waitlist for later programmes during the year or following year.

Children who have previously attended a KidzaCool Adventures programme may apply for another stay however, we endeavour to prioritise first time applicants and those who have high needs for a break. Any remaining

places may then be offered to return stay applicants.

KidzaCool Adventures Holiday Programme Dates for April.

- Northern Region
Phone 09 437 9050 25-29 April
- Auckland Region
Phone 09 534 4017 25-29 April
- Midland Region
Phone 07 345 9097 25-29 April
- East Coast Region
Phone 06 867 5614 25-29 April
- Central Region
Phone 06 364 8069 25-29 April
- Christchurch Region
Phone 03 332 2541 25-29 April
- Southern Region
Phone 03 446 8119 25-29 April

If you have an agency/person supporting your application this can be noted on the application form. (GRG Trust NZ is your referral) All applications are welcome, if you do not have any current involvement with any of the agencies or services listed above, we will still accept your application and may assist in linking you up with a local service support contact if needed.

For more information on how the programme works and the application process click here to download our FAQ sheet or here to download the KidzaCool overview sheet.

Download the application form for one or more children, or to update the details of previous attendees, or you can contact our regional offices (contact us) to request a form to be sent to you.



One Simple Tip For Surviving After School Meltdowns

I sometimes wonder if I am the only parent who looks forward to seeing their children after a day apart, only to discover they kept all their best behaviour for their teacher! I used to cajole, attempt to cuddle, reprimand and sometimes join in the wailing myself, but last year I learnt something that completely changed the way I manage this part of the day.

Our children's brains are wired to develop in a safe and solid relationship with us their parents, and when they're apart from us their brains work very hard to both process everything that is happening and remain 'okay' without us to lean on. When they see us at the end of the day their guard comes down, and we get to see all the frustrations, sadness and anger they may have felt during the day.

So when the after school meltdowns begin, I now remind myself that this is normal and it really is a privilege, because it actually means they feel safe to let it out. Often the good news and positive emotions follow quickly when the challenging ones are allowed expression. So I listen, empathise: "that sounds so tough hun...you were really brave....," listen, offer no solutions, listen again, cuddle (if I'm allowed) and try and make sure each child gets a turn. Most days, relatively quickly, we settle back to normal.

Shirley Pastiroff. Counsellor and Mindful Parenting trainer.

Coordinator News

It is with sad regret we inform you that Dianah Roberts from Kaitia has resigned to concentrate on her family. We wish her well and thank her for all she has done. If anyone in Kaitia is keen to pick up the mantle please email Diana East on d.east13@yahoo.co.nz .

Advance notification – GRG National Summit

Our management team are in the process of organising our GRG National Summit 2016.

It will be held at the Novotel, Ellerslie in Auckland on Wednesday 15th and Thursday 16th June 2016.

We are excited about this summit and the theme for this year which is Hear our Voices. It reflects a focus on the voices of caregivers and children raised by grandparents and whanau/kin caregivers. We will be sharing some preliminary findings from our 2016 Survey and Research and this will be complemented by the findings from another New Zealand study of grandchildren raised by their grandparents, reflecting on their lives; which is the first study of its kind ever to take place in New Zealand!

The format for this year's Summit will be somewhat different to that of the past as we drill down further and explore the results of the Survey, together with more interactive sessions and topics that relate directly to the challenges you face day to day in your caregiving role.

So we ask that you please mark your diaries now and keep these dates free.

Further information about the programme and costs will be sent out soon. We hope you can all make it and look forward to seeing you there.

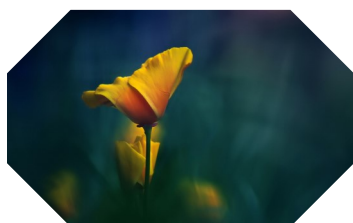
Make plans now for this exciting event that will be sure to help you as a caregiver!

Grand's reflections...

Wow

My 3 year old grandson, soon to be 4 loves going to his daycare and he never ceases to amaze me as to how bright and quick minded he is becoming and how confident he is too. This may seem a bit biased or shallow but that was one of the things that really worried me when he was a baby; as he was born with a partial cleft palate which made it very difficult for him to feed. However this wasn't identified until his 6 week check which was a very difficult time and we were very close to losing him.

But today we count our blessings and his other 5 siblings are all doing well too. With the older 2 brothers we are hoping their applications to Boarding school will be fruitful while the others continue to do well at school.



It's a Joy Bringing Up My Grandson

When he was 3 years old, he would pick the heads off the yellow flowers on the lawn and bring them in for me.

This day he came running inside, with a big smile on his face and something in his hands, I open up my hand for him to put it in, well it was a live mouse, a baby one at that, did I jump? Yes.

He had taken the mouse off his cat to give to me. Yes he is a joy.

The Baby Swallows are Learning to Fly

2 minutes before our one was to leave for the school bus, I was standing at the open kitchen window looking out. The next minute one of the baby swallows flew straight at my face. I ducked and it flew in the house and hit one of the fixed big windows and dropped to the ground.

OK first thought's raced in a matter of seconds and actions began.

Find the bird, yep on floor, cover with cloth.

Shut all doors so the cat cannot get in.

Get school things out to front door so grand does not know about this, do not need any more drama.

Quietly call dear husband to help

Say goodbye and hugs at front door and get her on her way.

Hide in office whilst Dear Husband does what he needs to do

He appears in my office holding a LIVE baby swallow

It flies back outside from his hand from the deck.

Phew all's well.



Thank you to all our funders in 2015/2016 who have contributed to the cost of producing this newsletter each month.



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIAITO ORA



FOUNDATION
NORTH
Te Kaitiaki Pūtea o
Tamaki o Tai Tokerau



COGS
Community Organisation
Grants Scheme

Can we help you?

Members ONLY services are available nationwide
Caregivers Toll free helpline
0800 GRANDS (0800 472 637)
For landline caregivers only please
New members and general information please dial ext. 1

Members' Support Manager:

Di Vivian
Auckland/free callers:
(09) 480 6530
Email Di at: office@grg.org.nz

GRG Trust NZ

**PO Box 34892
Birkenhead
Auckland 0746**

**Suite 4 (Ground floor)
Rawene Chambers
15 Rawene Rd
Birkenhead Auckland 0626**

Office Manager:
Kelly Vivian 09 418 3753
Email office2@grg.org.nz or
kelly@grg.org.nz

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter or you have changed address please update your details by

contacting Kelly at 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.

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Member Support Manager: Di & Team (as a caregiver you are part of our team)

Heoi ano, na. *E te Atua, aroha mai..... O God shower us with love.*

Ka kite Ka Whangaia ka tupu, ka puawai - That which is nurtured, blossoms and grows

We are respectful, we listen, we learn

He rōpū manaaki, he rōpū whakarongo, he rōpū ako mātou

Please pass this on to other grandparents/kin carers you know.

GRG Trust Head Office hours are 9am – 2pm daily. (We raise grandchildren too)

We are a Charitable Trust



[Anti-bullying](#)



0800 456 450



Give a Little for GRG

<https://www.givealittle.co.nz/org/grg>

www.powertoprotect.net.nz



SUPPORT GROUP CONTACT NUMBERS

Locality	Name	Phone	E-mail Address
Ashburton **	Margaret Mason	03 308 0190	margaretmason1010@gmail.com
Auckland East **	Tess Gould-Thorpe	09 535 6903	pan@xnet.co.nz
Auckland North **	Bonnie Williams	09 473 9055	willingclan@xtra.co.nz
Auckland South **	Virginia Peebles	09 277 7514	
Auckland West **	Debbie Hall	09 818 7828	debron@xtra.co.nz
Auckland Papakura/ Pukekohe** **	Sharon Warne	0274194777	warneysvision@hotmail.com
Canterbury **	Veronica Brunt	03 942 5935	r.v.brunt@paradise.net.nz
Dannevirke**	Malcolm Johnson	06 3740407	
Dargaville **	Sandy Zimmer	09 439 4420	sandy.zimmer@hotmail.com
Gisborne **			
Hamilton **	Pat Davis	0226007672	hamilton111.grg@gmail.com
Invercargill **	Lynette Nielsen	03 216 0411	jhandli2@xtra.co.nz
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Papamoa *	Rawinia Macredie	07 562 2850	jnmacredie@kinect.co.nz
Porirua Wellington **	Lise Maru	04 477 9445	lise.maru@clear.net.nz
Rotorua **	Anne Donnell	020 402 22910	rotoruagrg@gmail.com
Taumarunui **	Ruth Sandiford Phelan	027 757 8097	ruthsp@email.com
Taupo *	Viv Needham	07 378 1811	viv.maree@gmail.com
Tauranga	Karen Ormsby	021 225 5108	jewelzs@hotmail.com
Te Kuiti **	Kay Higgins	027 430 2939	palmdrive@xtra.co.nz
Tokoroa *			
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Wanganui **	Jenny Morton	027 443 7780	jaydeez@clear.net.nz
Wellington **	Cecilee Donovan	04 477 0632	cecileed@gmail.com
Whakatane **	Shirley Faulkner	07 308 8524	shirleyfaulkner@xtra.co.nz
Whangarei **	Janet Puriri	09 435 0044	

For the most up to date contact details please go to our website www.grg.org.nz

If you are a grandparent or whanau caregiver and need a referral to one of our Field Officers please call 0800 GRANDS (0800 472 637) or if you are in Auckland please call 09 480 6530