



NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2017

DATABASE: 6883 WHANAU CARERS

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

Hello from the CEO

Tena ki a koutou katoa, me to Tau Hou hari!

Hello and a Happy 2017! I hope this newsletter finds you all in good heart for the year ahead and enjoying the warm summer weather.

2017 started on a wonderfully high note with the announcement in the **Queen's New Year Honours List**, that our very own founder and hero to many; **Diane Vivian was made a companion of the Queens Service Order**. Literally thousands of caregivers have been the beneficiaries of Di's wisdom, experience and dedication to supporting grandparent and whanau caregivers over the last 18 years and will continue to, as she carries on her important work providing member support via our 0800 GRANDS helpline and this newsletter each month. See page 2 for our tribute to Di.

In this newsletter, we also have important information on the **School Year Start-up Payment** for Unsupported Child/Orphans Benefit recipients, the **Extraordinary Care Fund dates** and **KidzaCool Adventure Camps** and our **'Thank you' card design competition**.

The year ahead promises to be a busy one for GRG with many changes on the horizon with the implementation of the new *Oranga Tamariki* (Ministry for Vulnerable Children) to take effect on 1 April.

Proposed changes to the care and protection legislation, that aims to ensure a "child-centred" system, is the subject of a Bill before the Social Services Select Committee and accepting submissions until **15 February 2017**.

GRG will be making submissions on this Bill and if anyone is interested in having their say they can. [See the links here](#) for more information.



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We will keep you informed in the coming months as to the impact these changes may have for grandparent, whanau caregivers and the children.

Finally, thank you to all of you who participated in our **GRG Support Services Feedback Survey** online in November last year. We have received some wonderful feedback and ideas which will greatly assist us in our planning for improvements to our services in the coming months.

Until then, all the very best to you, your family and precious mokopuna.

Kia kaha.

Kate Bundle, CEO

An Honour and a Tribute to Di

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ's Founding Trustee, **Diane Marguerite Vivian** has been made a companion of the **Queen's Service Order** in the New Year's Honour's list 2017.

In 1997, Diane Vivian and her husband, Erin, took on the full-time care of their foster daughter's two children. Two years later she started the first support group for full-time parent caregivers in Birkenhead, Auckland to help others who, like her, were struggling with a multitude of challenges, dealing with Work and Income, the Family Court and Mental Health services and having difficulty getting access to professional help and financial support for their vulnerable grandchildren.

In 2001, she set up the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ (GRG) which today supports over 6,000 full-time grandparent and whanau/kin caregivers. GRG is a Ministry for Social Development contracted and approved provider, of a range of support services for grandparent and whanau caregivers of 'at risk' children.

I have been privileged to work with Diane since she set up the first support group in 1999, as co-trustee for 14 years and then as co-worker for the Trust since April 2015. The photo above was taken for the article, [The Grandparent Trap \(North and South Magazine July 2003\)](#) and had the caption *"steel-willed grandparent advocate, Diane Vivian with her girls Danielle (left) and Rachele. She can't figure why foster children and their caregivers get suitable help and grandparents who face the same problems don't"*.

That 'steel-will' says as much about her character and tenacity as her commitment to advocating for better supports for grandparent and whanau caregivers. It is the same today as it was in those early days, but in the years since, she has achieved much and her part in improving the lives of grandparent care families and to the knowledge and understanding of the grandparent caregiver experience in New Zealand and internationally has been considerable.

Through her voluntary work for GRG she has spoken to thousands of people, educating and advocating for a better deal for them including representing GRG at the **First International Summit for Grandparent and**

Kinship Caregivers: Grandparents Caring for Children: A Global Challenge, in New York in 2007.

Her work with policy advisers, politicians and community organisations has contributed to many positive and meaningful law and policy changes. These important changes have affected thousands of children and include the increase in the base rate of

the Unsupported Child and Orphan's Benefit to match foster carers in 2009, government funding for respite and holiday camps for children in grandparent care, and work exemptions for their caregivers in receipt of income support.

Diane was appointed to the Ministerial Advisory Panel to advise the Minister for Social Development on support for children in extended families. From

2014 this resulted in the introduction of the School Year Start-up Payment, Establishment Grant and eligibility for the Extraordinary Care Fund for recipients of the Unsupported Child and Orphan's Benefit.

Diane has also manned our 0800 GRANDS helpline and written our monthly newsletter from the outset. For example, in the 12 months to 31 March 2016 Diane personally handled 4556 calls through the helpline. Many of these were lengthy calls from desperate grandparents at the end of their tether, ready to give up, feeling hopeless and unable to cope with the enormous and complex stresses and challenges of raising babies, toddlers and teenagers in their later years on limited resources. She has helped thousands of caregivers over the past 18 years, instilling hope and reassurance while guiding them on their challenging caregiver journey, as well as empowering them with the information and knowledge they've needed to access help from others.

As a colleague, Diane has been an inspirational and exceptional role model for what it means to give back and to help the less privileged or vulnerable members of our society without motivation for personal gain, reward or recognition for it. I am regularly stunned at her tenacity and dedication to her work that has gone years beyond her own experience walking in the shoes as a grandparent raising grandchildren.

I have seen Diane weather the storms and challenges that came with raising her two moko many times over



the years - the extremes of which would have felled most people. Yet despite her personal circumstances she has never departed from her desire to help others walking the same path or her resolute determination to speak out for them.

From my observations and that of many who have worked with or benefited from her help, she has an extraordinary ability to provide a steady, kind, empathetic listening ear and at the same time, provide unwavering, non-judgmental support and

guidance informed by her experience, wisdom and insight into life and what it means to be a truly decent human being.

On behalf of the GRG members, staff, volunteer Support Coordinators, the Board of Trustees, and all who have benefitted from your wisdom and support over the years, congratulations on this well-deserved honour and thank you!

Kate Bundle, CEO

School Year Start-up Fund

The School Year Start-up Payment is available to people who are caring for someone else's child and helps with the costs that mostly happen at the beginning of the year, in particular pre-school and school-related costs such as clothing, school fees and stationery.

This fund opens on 16 January and closes on 28 February. This link will be available from the [MSD Work and Income website](#) on 16 January. We will send it to you via email when it is available. You need to apply for this online. There is no need to visit Work & Income. Remember it is also for pre-school children. If you can't do this online yourself and/or you need help, call us on 0800 472 637, 09 480 6530, or 09 418 3753 (between 9am and 2pm) and we can do this for you. You will need to have your Work & Income client number ready.

Important information

- ◆ This is a once-a-year payment.
- ◆ You need to apply every year between mid-January and the end of February.
- ◆ You won't be taxed on this money and you won't have to pay it back.
- ◆ A lot of the costs associated with raising a child can come at the beginning of the year, such as pre-school or school-related costs like fees, clothing and stationery. This payment is to help take the pressure off carers at this time of the year.

Who can get it

- ◆ You can get a School and Year Start-up Payment if you are receiving the
- ◆ Unsupported Child's Benefit or Orphan's Benefit.
- ◆ You can get the payment for every child that you receive these benefits for.

How much you get

- ◆ The amount paid is based on the age of the child at the end of February each year.
- ◆ Age of child (at end of February)

Payment

0 - 4 years	\$400
5 - 9 years	\$450
10 - 13 years	\$500
14 years +	\$550

How to apply

- ◆ You can apply between mid-January and the end of February and it will be paid within 10 working days.
- ◆ You need to apply every year to receive the payment and you'll receive a letter reminding you to do this.
- ◆ If you have a good reason for not being able to apply between mid-January and the end of February, such as being in hospital, talk to GRG/Work and Income about your situation as they may still be able to make this payment to you.
- ◆ You don't need to show any receipts or quotes to get the School and Year Start-up Payment. However, it is expected that the payment will go towards covering the child's school-related costs, or costs arising at the start of the year.

The Extraordinary Care Fund

Opens on 16 January and closes 17 February 2017.

For this payment, you do need to see your local Work and Income office. Make sure you get an appointment within this time frame. There have been some changes so please go to this link to check it all out.

<https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/extraordinary-care-fund.html>

Message from Di

Oh what a shock it was to get a letter about the Queen's Honour. It is not often I am speechless, as most will know, but this knocked my socks off.

To the secret squirrels that organised this I am humbled in your faith. To the over 700 messages, emails, telephone calls and personal messages, thank you folks, you are too kind.

It has been and still will be, my absolute pleasure to walk alongside you all, when we move into unsheltered waters with our precious ones we are blessed to take in.

Through your struggles, joy and sadness, if I can shine a light, create a laugh and acknowledge you via phone or email or this newsletter then my soul is settled.

It is not until you have walked this path that you truly understand the issues faced.

This is a journey I have shared with you all.

To me, each and every one of you are heroes.

Yes, you may have learned something from us but in return you also have taught me so much as well. That wisdom I can pass on to others, so thank you.

The words in the piece (see image to the right) epitomise my thoughts at this particular time.

So, until next time we speak or communicate it is business/mahi as usual.

God bless you all.

Di



Photo courtesy of Yvonne Powley

Ma te matauranga ka whakapono
(By knowledge comes faith)

Ma te whakapono ka rongo wairua
(By faith comes the spirit)

Ma te rongo wairua ka marama
(By the spirit comes light)

Ma te marama ka oho mauri
(By the light comes an awakening of the spirit)

Ma te oho mauri ko mohio
(By an awakening of the spirit comes understanding)

Ma te mohio ka whaiwhakaaro
(By understanding comes wisdom)

Ma te whaiwhakaaro ka hihiko
(By wisdom comes inspiration)

Ma te hihiko ka mahi a
(By inspiration work is done)

Ma te mahi nga ka putanga hua
(By work comes forth fruit)

Ma te putanga hua ka whai oranga
(By your fruit you make a life)



KidzaCool Adventures

Quality support and respite for kin/whanau/foster carers.

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!!

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 who 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.

Applications can also be supported by any of the agencies below:

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ (email: office@grg.org.nz or phone 09 4806530)

Fostering Kids (email: ceo@fosteringkids.org.nz free phone: 0800.693.323)

- Social Workers in Schools (SWiS)
- Strengthening Families
- Child, Youth and Family

Community based social service providers

If you have an agency/person supporting your application this can be noted on the application form. 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. <http://www.standforchildren.org.nz/contact-us>

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.

Thank You Card Design Competition

Win a \$100 Visa Prezzy Card!

At GRG, there are times when we like to say 'thank you' with a card, to our wonderful supporters, donors and special people who go out of their way to help.

So, for the next month until **24 February 2017**, we are running a design competition for an image to be used.

How about encouraging your moko in what's left of the school holidays to liberate their creative spirits for a good cause by putting pen, paintbrush or other artistic skills to work.

Using any medium, the competition is open to all GRG members and their moko to create an original image that best reflects GRG.

The image must fit on an **A4 sheet of paper** (landscape/horizontal orientation), which can either be **scanned as a PDF or JPEG and emailed to** kate@grg.org.nz or **posted** to GRG Trust NZ Office, PO Box 34892, Birkenhead, Auckland 0746

The winning entry will be announced in the March 2017 newsletter.

Note: By entering this competition all entries are made on the basis that GRG reserves all rights in the images submitted including the right to publish them in any other GRG publication or website with the artist's name credited.

Grand's reflections...

It's the little things guys

Just ran to the store for a couple of things tonight. Was in the aisle with a Grandma (she referred to herself as such) and 4 kids -- maybe 10, 7, 3, and 8 months old. The 3-year-old was having meltdowns about what toothbrush she wanted. The 2 oldest were arguing about which one was getting the power ranger one because they both couldn't have the same. Thankfully baby slept thru the entire thing. Grandma was trying to negotiate, calm, soothe, and draw the line -- you all know what I mean.

All of a sudden, the 3-year-old had to go to the toilet -- RIGHT NOW!! So, Grandma enlisted the help of oldest to take Miss 3 to the bathroom.



In the calm that ensued, momentarily I stepped over to her and said "You're doing a great job Grandma. You've got this."

She looked up with tears in her eyes and said "Sometimes I sure don't feel like it" and I replied "I know the feeling too". We chatted then for a minute and she told me I really made her day with my comment.

Thankful am I

I am so very thankful for this group. Before finding it, I felt so alone, as though no one really understood what we are going through. And they didn't. You can't understand unless you've been through it yourself. You guys have and are going through it.

But I read through newsletters and we all have so much in common and I just want to say thank you all for what you are doing for your families. I know at times it may seem like we are all just trying to keep our heads above water, but please remember you are making a HUGE difference in your grandbabies lives.

One day they will understand everything you've done for them and will be amazed by you! Just this evening our 7-year-old grandson was getting ready for bed and he said, "Thank you, Nanny." I asked him for what and his response was "for everything, for taking care of us and loving us. I love you, Nanny."

He's only 7 and he's already beginning to understand. Now if that doesn't make it all worth it I don't know what does.

God bless you all.





Anti-bullying



0800 456 450



www.powertoprotect.net.nz



Give a Little to GRG

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

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

Chief Executive:

Kate Bundle 027 2446763
Email: kate@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.

Disclaimer: Opinions or views expressed in this newsletter shall be understood as reflecting those of the author as quoted and are not to be taken as given or endorsed by GRG.

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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

Advertise Your Business With GRG

Put your business in front of our 6000+ readers every month by advertising your business and services in our monthly newsletter.

Your support for GRG not only gets your business message out there but also shows that you support your local community of grandparents, whanau caregivers and the children and young people they are raising.

For more information and advertising options please contact: Kate Bundle on 027 2446763 or kate@grg.org.nz



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TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA



Thank you to our Sponsors and Funders supporting GRG's Support Services throughout New Zealand including this newsletter



SUPPORT GROUP CONTACT NUMBERS

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

* Telephone Support ** Telephone Support and Meetings

Auckland: North Shore **	Diane Vivian (temp)	09 480 6530	office@grg.org.nz
Papakura/Pukekohe **	Sharon Warne	027 419 4777	warneysvision@hotmail.com
Waitakere**	Debbie Hall	09 818 7828	debron@xtra.co.nz
Waiuku	Luana Misa	021 070 8465	luanapayne@hotmail.co.nz
South Auckland**	Virginia Peebles	09 277 7514	
East Auckland/ Tamaki**	Tess Gould-Thorpe	09 535 6903	theresagoouldthorpe@gmail.com
Canterbury **	Veronica Brunt	03 942 5935	r.v.brunt@paradise.net.nz
Dannevirke	Malcolm Johnson	06 374 0407	
Dargaville*	Sandy Zimmer	09 439 4420	
Hamilton / Huntly**	Pat Davis	07 855 0530	hamilton111.grg@gmail.com
Hastings	Tom Kupa	06 879 4302	kupakarate@outlook.com
Invercargill / Gore **	Lynette Nielsen	03 216 0411	invercargillgrg@gmail.com
Kaikohe *	Moengaroa Floyed	09 401 3057	floyedz@xtra.co.nz
Kaitia *	Martha Taonui-Andrews	027 266 2653	marthataonuis@xtra.co.nz
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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	