



NEWSLETTER - JUNE 2016

DATABASE: 6450 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



Message from Di Vivian, Founder,
GRG Trust NZ

THANK YOU!

Thank you to all the wonderful grandparent and whanau caregivers who took part in our 2016 Grandparent and Whanau Caregiver Sur-

vey. The survey period is now at an end.

Over 1000 caregivers had their say on the economic and social issues impacting on them between March and the end of May 2016.

We are thrilled to have had such an incredible response from you all and to hear from over 10% of the grandparent caregiver population in New Zealand!

What we learn from this important study will help us to promote positive changes and improvements to the support and services you rely on and need daily in your lives and we look forward to sharing the findings of this study with you in the coming months. At our 4th National GRG Caregivers and Member's Summit on 7 & 8 September 2016 we will be presenting preliminary findings from the research and the full Research Report will be available in October/ November 2016.

For any media interest in this study please contact Kate, our Communications Manager & Business Development Manager.

Thank you too for the support for this study from the



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Lotteries Grants Board, the Canterbury University Human Ethics Committee and Dr Liz Gordon and her team at Pukeko Research Limited.

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

Our research waka has reached the shore.



Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Winner

Children with High-Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder Show Unique Handwriting Patterns

Integrative education system should consider this factor, say experts

Date: June 1, 2016 Source: University of Haifa

Summary:

The new study found that children with high-functioning autism spectrum disorder integrated in regular schools find it difficult to perform writing tasks. This can impair their academic achievements, social availability, and self-confidence, say experts.

The handwriting performance of children with high-functioning autism differs from that of children without autism. Accordingly, the education system should consider the types and formats of tasks given to these children when they are integrated in regular schools. This conclusion emerges from a new study undertaken at the University of Haifa. "The typical process of handwriting performance among children with high-functioning autism is unique, but while the education system addresses reading skills, it pays almost no attention to handwriting skills," explains Prof. Sara Rosenblum, the author of the study.

Children with high-functioning autism experience difficulties in the social, sensory, and movement fields, but differ from other children on the autism spectrum in terms of their linguistic and cognitive development. Among other differences, these children are usually integrated in regular schools where they are required to perform routine activities such as reading and writing. Writing tasks play an important part in academic progress: writing-related activities account for 30-60 percent of daily activity time in schools. Despite this, the education system places a strong emphasis on reading, whereas skills development, monitoring, and assistance in handwriting performance are much less frequent. There is also a lack of teacher training in this important area.

The present study is unique and the first of its kind in the world. The study was undertaken as part of the thesis prepared by Hemda Amit Ben



Simhon
of the

Neuro-developmental Center at Maccabi HMO, supervised by Prof. Rosenblum, and in consultation with Dr. Eynat Gal, an autism specialist, both from the Department of Occupational Therapy at the University of Haifa. The study included 60 children aged 9-12 from the 3rd through 6th grades at various schools. Half the subjects were children with high-functioning autism spectrum disorder with IQs above 80, while the other half were children with normal development. The children were asked to complete three writing tasks: writing the first name and family name; copying a paragraph; and writing a story describing a picture that was shown to them.

The writing tasks were completed using a special system developed by Prof. Rosenblum that provides objective, computerized data relating not only to the rhythm and speed of handwriting, but also to the degree of pressure applied on the page by the writer, the length of time the pen is in the air, the degree of slant of the pen during handwriting, and so forth.

The study findings show that in 91.5 percent of the instances, the objective indicators provided by the computerized system enabled the identification of children with high-functioning autism as distinct from children with normal development. In other words, the handwriting performances of the two groups showed statistically significant differences. The children with high-functioning autism produced taller and broader letters; waiting times on paper and in the air were longer; and the degree of slant of the pen was smaller.

It also emerged that the differences between the children with high-functioning autism and those with normal development were particularly prominent in the copying task, and less so in the

free writing task. The text copying task required significantly more time. The researchers suggest that the need to invest a long period of time in the handwriting task may exacerbate fatigue, impair concentration, and even hamper the ability to produce handwritten content. This investment in the handwriting task may come at the expense of availability for other academic tasks the children receive, as well as their availability for social challenges in the classroom. "When a child has difficulty writing, they effectively have to cope with this difficulty over many hours a day, making it harder for them to cope with the additional challenges they face (social, cognitive, and functional).

For example, if a child has to stay behind in recess to copy text from the board, they will have less time to practice social skills," the researchers explained.

The researchers added that the study findings are particularly important in light of the trend to integrate children with different disabilities in the

regular education system, in accordance with the Special Education Law.

"Since children with high-functioning autism are integrated in classes together with children with normal development, it is important to be careful not to pressure them during the performance of handwriting tasks. They should be given sufficient time, because time pressure creates cognitive stress and may impair the content of their handwriting. Given the central role of writing throughout the academic process, including in academic studies, improving handwriting skills with the assistance of an occupational therapist may improve academic abilities and contribute to an improvement in achievements and in self-confidence," concluded the study authors Ben Simhon and Prof.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/06/160601084649.htm>

Bubble Wrap Insulation

Cut the bubble wrap to the size of the window pane with scissors. Spray a film of water on the window using a spray bottle. Apply the bubble wrap while the window is still wet and press it into place. To remove the bubble wrap, just pull it off starting from a corner. The actual bubbles go against the window pane and a drop or two of bleach in the water prevents any mould growing.



OK did a test today and when I touch the bubble wrap it is not cold, but touching the window without it is freezing. But a word of warning: Measure your window first, lay out bubble wrap and do not trust your eyes. These millions of bubbles confuse one's eyes when cutting. Down the length pop little dots with marker pen when measuring across. Marry up these dots with a straight ruler, drawing a line between them. Then cut down that line.

I will not say what my test looks like as I did not do this, my eyes went googly with all these bubbles. Hah hah.



Save the Date!
Book your travel &
Accommodation NOW!

Novotel, Ellerslie, Auckland 2016 4th National Caregivers and Members Summit

We are delighted to advise that the Honourable Anne Tolley, Minister for Social Development has accepted our invitation to speak at this year's Summit about the much-heralded "transformational change" and overhaul of Child Youth and Family services following the recent review. With respect to the thousands of children in grandparent care, we have also asked her to talk about:

- What responsibility does the State have to children in grandparent care?
- What support is there for them?
- Will the changes to CYF services affect these children?
- What initiatives are planned to support full-time grandparent/whanau caregivers and children in their care?

With solution-focused workshops and sessions focused on the needs of full-time grandparent and whanau caregivers and professionals working with kin caregivers and law and policy makers the programme includes.

- Findings from the first ever NZ research in which grandchildren reflect on their experiences being parented by grandparents, and their recommendations for changes in law and policy;
- Preliminary findings from our GRG Grandparent and Whanau Caregiver Survey 2016
- What every grandparent and whanau caregiver needs to know about P and how to stop your moko following the path towards P addiction
- Understanding why children behave the way they do
- Parenting children affected by trauma, abuse, anxiety and attachment issues
- New legislation and law changes affecting vulnerable children – why and what you need to know about it.

The full programme is nearing completion and will be published online at the end of June 2016 with a PDF copy emailed to members at that time. **Registrations will open from 20 July 2016.**

If you are intending to register for our Summit, you may want to make arrangements to save the date, book your accommodation and travel now.

Novotel Ellerslie: 09 5299090

To help you with your plans before registrations open on 20 July 2016:

Registration Costs

GRG Members:	\$20 for both days
Non-members:	\$155 for both days
Early-bird:	\$135 for both days
Day one only:	\$90
Day Two only:	\$65
Conference Dinner:	\$50

Summit Timetable:

Wednesday 7 September:	8.30am to 5pm	Conference Dinner:	7pm
Thursday 8 September:	9:00am to 1pm		

Organise Respite Breaks Easily with MyCare!



Grandparents caring for disabled grandchildren may like to use a free service to find relief carers.

The Ministry of Health has funded free access to MyCare, a new online marketplace that connects people seeking or offering home-based help in communities across New Zealand.

More than 1000 workers have created profiles at MyCare.

Grandparents seeking help can directly message workers of interest, and post jobs workers in their area can respond to.

To access MyCare free, visit www.mycare.co.nz and click the link at the top of the page. You must have an email address, and the person requiring care (a disabled grandchild, for example) must receive Disability Support funding such as Carer Support Subsidy or Individualised Funding.

After completing a short online form, you'll be able to complete your MyCare account, create a password, and list a job!

You'll be able to view the profiles of people seeking relief care work in your area, and your job will be visible to them so you can contact each other.

MyCare is part of the National Carer Matching Service provided by not for profit Carers NZ. If you'd like help to access MyCare, or have questions, phone 0800 677 700.

Not eligible for free access to MyCare, but need care for you or someone in your household? Talk to MyCare about a subscription to help you find workers, make and manage arrangements, and keep others informed in a private Support Circle!

WOW

Yesterday my 12-year-old moko Mackey informs me he is going to camp at Tongariro for a week with 11 other school leaders. I told him how happy I was for him and then he said it was going to cost \$100 as he needed thermal underwear for climbing on the mountain. I told him I could maybe be able to afford the fees, but I had no money for the thermals. He then told me it was fine and he accepted that because, he had not kept reminding me about the camp.

He would inform the school's principal on arrival at school that day. He rang me from school this morning excitedly telling me "Nan get my bag ready, I'm off to camp, the principal is buying me

thermals." I am so grateful to the Manurewa Intermediate, and to a grandson who has always done so well, he's passionate about everything to do with school, and I'm happy to say his teacher loves him.

So with this wonderful principal I'm not really surprised he got to go...Bon Voyage Mackey!



Grand's reflections...

So Tired

Today on my way home from work, I was thinking how wonderful it would be if someone stopped by to take the kids out for pizza or ice cream or something. When they first came to live with us we had all kinds of offers and people saying they would help us out but life goes on and that just doesn't happen.

I just now finished mowing the lawn in between doing laundry and listening to them whine about things. I'm just tired. And my grandson is becoming somewhat of a problem.

I'm just plain tired. I work all day and then come home and work some more and never get to sleep when I should. If I get 5 hours of sleep, I feel lucky. And then the next day comes and it's the same old thing. Absolutely no one else except those of you on this journey can possibly understand what we go through.



Such is Life

My husband and I are raising our two grandchildren aged 8 and 10. They have been affected by the disease of addiction from before they were born. I know my daughter loves her kids, but her disease is so much stronger. I forced custody of my granddaughter shortly after she was born and I became aware of my daughter's use. When she became pregnant the 2nd time I had to ask myself how many kids was I willing to take and raise.

I found a recovery program for myself to help deal with how alcoholism and addiction have affected my life and in the process have gained a

greater understanding and empathy for the disease my daughter is facing. My husband and I had just sold our farm and moved to the suburbs so we would have more freedom to travel... God surely has a sense of humour... although at times I really don't think it's very funny. It has now been 6 months and we are all adapting... their sense of security I believe is increasing as is our level of acceptance... this surely WAS NOT 'Plan A' for any of us.

While both of my grandchildren have behavioural issues, my grandson is especially challenging and has been since he was about 4. He has been suspended from school several times and kicked out of every day-care he has ever attended. We are blessed that the school he is in now is willing to go to the lengths they are to help him. We have them in counselling (are in counselling ourselves) and are in the process of getting a diagnosis for him to see if medications will help. In the meantime, we are watching our "freedom years" fly out the window and trying to not be too resentful. We are so blessed in many ways. We have the means to pay for travel, but we cannot go far as we never know what he might do. The police have been involved twice because of his behaviour in public, and most respite caregivers are not willing or able to deal with that level of defiance. So we can only face this situation one day at a time.

I wanted to share a website that I found while researching his behaviours as I am learning. I am not pushing or advertising anything... I just found their articles extremely helpful and thought others might also, especially if they are dealing with a reactive and defiant child. It's called Empowering Parents and it is helping me when I just want to curl up in a ball, pull the covers over my head, and cry myself to sleep. While there is still breath, there is hope.

Here is a Clever Thing

Get the children to earn points for time on computers/iPads etc.

I decided my kids need more accountability for how much screen time they get.... So I made these Popsicle sticks... And now... They are seriously fighting over who gets to do what chores...

Wow... At least I will have a clean house!!



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

www.grg.org.nz



[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 **	Coming Soon		
Auckland East **	Tess Gould-Thorpe	09 535 6903	pan@xnet.co.nz
Auckland North **	Diane Vivian (Temp)	09 486530	office@grg.org.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
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Dargaville **	Sandy Zimmer	09 439 4420	sandy.zimmer@hotmail.com
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Porirua Wellington **	Lise Maru	04 477 9445	lise.maru@clear.net.nz
Rotorua **	Anne Donnell	020 402 22910	rotoruagrg@gmail.com
Ruakaka	Tauser Kingi	09 432 8611	tauser.kingi@vodafone.co.nz
Taumarunui **	Aroha Rudkin	027 873 0061	sf@ckcreap.org.nz
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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