



NEWSLETTER - DECEMBER 2015

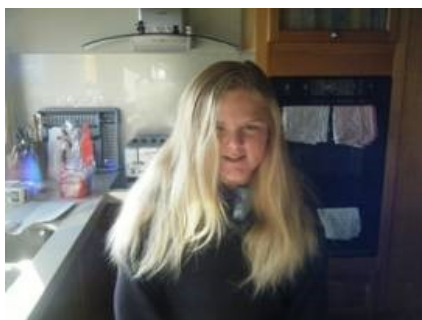
DATABASE: 6198 WHANAU CARERS

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

Shave for a cure

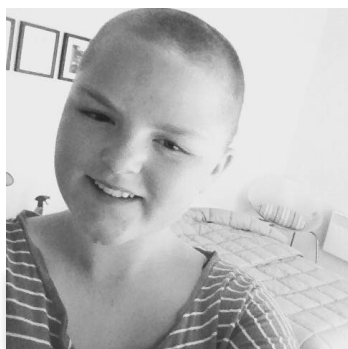
We were so proud of our eldest grand daughter, Michaela, this week after she had her golden locks shaved for Cure for Cancer.



She was one of twelve children who did the same in their college auditorium, raising over \$7,000 for the Charity.

Michaela donated her hair afterwards so that it could be used to make wigs for those sufferers who lose their hair.

It was very emotional and most of the adults watching were shedding tears over the fallen hair. Michaela had accumulated numerous beanies to wear until the hair grows back to an acceptable length, but I have noticed that she will go out, most days, without wearing one.



I wish I had had the 'guts' to do the same when I was a 'tween'.



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Got no credit on your cell?

If you've got no credit on your cellphone or a toll-bar on your phone and you need to contact a service like GRG, then call 0800 211 211. Ask the operator to put you through to us. This service also works for other organisations e.g. CAB

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Winner



Our Young Ones Do Grow Up



You may have to face this sooner or later. They turn 18 and want to go to Uni or into Tertiary Education. They need a Student Loan and also a Student Allowance. Student Loan is not usually an issue BUT a Student Allowance can cause huge grief if you have taken on the care of grandchildren and have been in receipt of the Unsupported Child Benefit.

I have been through this experience three times now and quite frankly it makes my blood boil. Why, I hear you ask?

It appears that because we have been in receipt of the UCB we are deemed to be their 'parents' and the young person is tested on the Student Loan Allowance on our income. I am not their parent as I did not give birth to them and find this highly offensive. If I was a Foster carer this would not be the case. Yet again grandparents/kin get penalised for taking these vulnerable children in rather than placing them in State Care. So even though we have got them through to 18 years and they are still at school, the UCB stops and we are still expected to financially support them, if they apply for a Student Allowance until they are 24 !!!

Parents' income (from Study Link's web site)

If you are under 24 and you don't have children, you can't get a student allowance if your parents earn more than:

- \$84,163.86 a year before tax, if you live with your parents while you study
- \$91,448.30 a year before tax, if you do not live with your parents while you study.

Parents - general definition

This provides a general definition of parents.

- This is a natural, adoptive or whangai parent, caregiver, step-parent, partner of your parent, or any other person acting as a parent who is responsible for your well-being and financial support.
- The Student Allowances Regulations 1998 defines a step-parent as a person who is not the student's father or mother, or a person acting in place of a parent of the student; but is a person who is married to, or in a civil union or in a de facto relationship with, the mother or father of the student or a person acting in place of the parent of the student.

Note: This may include a caregiver who receives an Orphan's Benefit or Unsupported Child's Benefit only if they are acting in place of a parent. A caregiver appointed by the Chief Executive of Child, Youth and Family or an agent recognised by the Children, Young Person's and Their Families Act 1989 is not regarded as a parent. (Source www.workandincome.govt.nz)

BUT:

The legislation states as follows: (And our Field officer advocate Tricia would love to test this.)

Definition of 'parent'

For the purposes of Student Allowances a "parent" includes:

- a natural parent
- a step-parent of the student
- any person acting in place of a parent of that student

Appointed guardians

'Parent' does not include people appointed as guardians by:

- the 'Chief Executive of Child, Youth and Family' or an agency recognised by the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989
- the family court under the Care of Children Act 2004

These appointed guardians are not regarded as parents for the purposes of determining Student Allowance entitlement because the responsibility is assumed by the body that appointed them rather than the caregivers.

There may be circumstances where the order for appointed guardianship ends but the student still lives with or is supported by their former guardians.

In these circumstances, you will need to determine the relationship between the student and their former guardian(s) in order to confirm if the former guardian is acting in the place of a parent.

A guardian who receives home for life assistance from Child, Youth and Family will generally be a 'parent' for Student Allowance purposes. In most cases Home for Life caregivers will become the legal guardian of the student and therefore meet the normal parental definition being a person acting in place of a parent of that student.

News for Hamilton GRG's

Kerry Batten, our Hamilton coordinator, has resigned due to health issues and we warmly wish him well. Pat Davis has taken on this role and he share-cares for twin grandsons. He is contactable on 07 855 0530 or 022 600 7672 and his email is hamilton111.grg@gmail.com. Welcome aboard Pat.



You are Not Alone

She entered the room, introduced herself and said no more, her eyes moved slowly round the room, others smiled at her but in return they only saw the sadness in her eyes. But there was also something else: pain, oh yes pain. One could almost taste it. The pain mixed with sadness permeated the room casting an air so thick one had trouble breathing. In the minds of others in that room, it took most of them back to their own time of sadness and pain, they understood, and did not pressure her.



A number of these ladies in this GRG meeting group had been attending this group for nearly 15 years. They gently included her into the conversation, and several noticed she was shaking, but made no comment, as they too remembered the very first time they had first showed up at this same meeting, feeling the same.

Totally alone and feeling very afraid, she said very little as others shared what was happening to them. Occasionally a tiny tear escaped her eyes and a comforting hand reached out for hers, no words needed. She listened intently as one particular gran, shared how she had been delivered 4 grandchildren to raise, with very little clothing or food to feed them and to make things worse she was also caring for her elderly mother who had dementia. She too had walked into this meeting so many years ago and had found connections and contacts for so many things that would assist her in this new role.

Slowly but very slowly the new lady began to share her heavy load. She also had 5 grandchildren all under 8 years of age and was getting no financial support and was caring for her husband who had, had a stroke. Tears fell from others eyes now. Things were tough, very tough. In amongst this heavy load one could

understand her pain and sadness, but you know what.....when she spoke of the grandchildren her eyes came alive and danced and glittered. Years dropped from her face. But then the enormity of this load descended yet again.

She joined GRG Trust that very day and received resources, DVD's and indeed clothing for the children. The Coordinator and couple of members stepped up alongside her to go with her to get financial support from Work & Income and link her into local food banks. She now has carers support to help her with her husband and the whole group rallied round her to help, not overwhelmingly, with assistance from the GRG Trust NZ. She was linked into City Impact Church for their Community days that happen in her area, where a team came in a cleaned up her whole yard, now the children can play outside. At meetings today, she is a different woman. She is now the one offering to help others.

One is never alone, we are waiting for you, to hold your hand and guide you into the light for a brighter future, to empower you to once again take control of your life, and should you occasionally stumble we at the GRG Trust NZ will be there, even if it just on the end of the phone. Together we can and do make a difference for the children you raise and yourselves. God bless you, one and all.

Neighbourly Chat

In our experiences raising grandchildren, (many of whom have had very tough starts in life), we all know how they are prone to major melt-downs, tearful, screaming and being just down right angry. They can go from 0 – 10 in a heartbeat.

We live in homes and communities which are very close and in today's world the awareness of child abuse is in many people's thoughts. So one

can understand if your neighbour hears constant screaming and carry on from your home and how they might react to it.

The last thing we want for you is to have a notification to Child Youth and Family services from some 'well' meaning neighbour. We sadly do live, in many instances, in isolation in neighbourhoods where we do not even know our neighbours. Therefore may we please suggest you go over and meet your neighbour and explain to them that you have a child or children with special needs who acts out due to a past life. That they are safe living with you and the issues that they may hear are how the child is dealing with their neglect and abuse from the past.

We did this with our neighbour many years ago. Her husband was a High Court Judge who had sadly passed away, and she was on her own. Regularly our young one would front up at her door with tales of abuse and neglect, no food and no clothing, (flashbacks to a past life) and wanting to live at her home. But because she was aware of our situation, she knew this was not so and would send her back home again. This child also said the same at school, so please inform your neighbours and your school so they are aware of these sorts of issues.

Do not feel Whakama (shame). Hey we need all the help we can get and not an unfounded allegation and the stress associated with it.

Feeling the Work Overload Lately

Same old chores day after day, thinking up meals to feed hungry kids day after day. You'd think feeding them once a week or even once a day like the cats would be enough but no, they have hollow legs and are always starving an hour after a meal it seems.

As for the laundry, I believe every person in this house must use at least four towels each to wipe their hands. It's never-ending. One person has a glass of water and puts the glass in the sink - and it breeds! Sink full of dirty dishes all

day long and believe me I seem to be the only dishwasher around here that cares about the breeding program going on in this kitchen.

Ready to have a melt-down but had to go and buy the groceries first. And I lingered in town. Got my hair done on the spur of the moment and felt like a million dollars then wandered off to have a delicious lunch (enjoying my own company for a change and someone else's food) and left without having to do a single dish. Did I need new shoes - love shoe shopping even if I don't buy anything, just nice to know I could if I wanted without thinking about kids sandals or gumboots or school shoes etc.

Finally hit the supermarket feeling like I could tackle everything and I've decided that every week before I do the food run, I shall take myself off for a delicious lunch somewhere where I can think my own thoughts at my own pace by my own-self. Pure indulgence and I shall enjoy every bit of it. Might even get my nails done next week. Mmmm. Feel so much better.

Pauline Sloan.

Our 0800 number

Please be aware that this service cannot be accessed from a cell phone. We apologise for this inconvenience but we are not in a financial position to enable this for cell-phone charges. If you have a free calling plan on your phone please phone 09 480 6530 between 8am – 2pm. You can call free on the 0800 number from a landline if you are outside Auckland. However if you are in the toll-free Auckland calling area please call the 09 480 6530 number instead.



Grand's reflections...

Teenagers

I call you 'Ma'

I call you "Ma" though you're really my
"Grandmother"

But more a "Ma" than any "Ma" could be.
I love you so much more than any other"
You took me in your arms and set me free.

I said a Mother's Day Prayer for you to thank the
Lord above for blessing me with a lifetime
of your tender hearted love

I thanked God for the caring you've
shown me through the years, for the
closeness we have enjoyed in time of
laughter and of tears.

And so, I thank you from the heart for all
you have done for me and I bless the Lord
for giving me the best "Ma", oops!"
"Grandmother" there could be!

My "Grandmother"" my Friend so dear
throughout my life you're always near.
A tender smile to guide my way you're the
sunshine to light my day.
A hug and kiss, so warm and soft, to help me
carry on.

If I could've chosen, I would have picked no other.
Thanks to you... my lifelong friend and "Precious
Grandmother"

I was fed up with my 17 year old grandson yet again. His ennui and lack of drive was getting to me. I expressed my frustration and said I almost wished he would rebel and challenge me. He replied that it was hard to rebel against a grandparent as they were wise and probably right! Well that took the wind out of my sails.

Nan J



Christmas Time

Christmas time for our grandchildren is full of happiness but tinged with sadness. Will the 'parent' remember? And send them a gift.....anything! Some years she does, more often she doesn't. One child in particular, the week before Christmas, will check the mail box daily 5 times a day. We can only hope that what they have got from us and extended family will somehow make up for this, but I doubt it. Our hearts break as do theirs.

On behalf of the GRG Board: David, Des, Di, Jo Anne, Judith and Sharon; our staff: Diana, Kate, Kelly, Margaret and Tricia, we wish you safe holidays and a joyous whanau time. Be safe.

We all close over the Christmas, New year period. 24th December – January 10th. The 0800 ext 1 number will be monitored daily on reduced hours.



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** **			
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
Kaikohe*	Moengaroa Floyed	027 644 0978	floyedz@xtra.co.nz
Kaitia *	Dianah Roberts	09 408 3489	
Kerikeri *	Martha Taonui-Andrews	0272662653	marthataonuians@xtra.co.nz
Levin*	Ann Waddell	06 362 7269	ann.hen@xtra.co.nz
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Nelson **	Paula Eggers	03 544 5714	paulaeggers2000@yahoo.com.au
Otago Est/Nth *	Aad & Leonie	03 465 1764	omaandopa@xtra.co.nz
Palmerston North*	Martha Taonui-Andrews	0272662653	marthataonuians@xtra.co.nz
Papamoa *	Rawinia Macredie	07 562 2850	jnmacredie@kinect.co.nz
Porirua Wellington **	Lise Maru	04 477 9445	lise.maru@clear.net.nz
Rotorua **	Sheree McKenzie	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	07 579 3571	jewelzs@hotmail.com
Te Kuiti **	Kay Higgins	027 430 2939	palmdrive@xtra.co.nz
Tokoroa *	Jo Gregory	027 862 5538	tokoroagrg@gmail.com
Upper Hutt **	Margaret Pearson	04 976 9475	maggiemaggie@paradise.net.nz
Wairarapa **	Tere Lenihan	06 379 5407	terel@swscc.org.nz
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