



May 2019 Newsletter

4,732 NZ GRG Member Families

Tena Koutou, Talofa Lava, Kia Orana, Fakaalofa Lahi Atu, Malo e Lelei, Bula, Taloha Ni, Kam Na Mauri, Namaste, Hallo, Bonjour, Hola and Greetings to all!

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**KEY DATES COMING UP**

**1 July 2019**

New National Care Standards for Children in Care come into effect. See page 5 for more information.

**21 June 2019**

Last date to apply for Extraordinary Care Fund for next funding round. See page 10 for more information.



**Find us on Facebook at**

[Facebook.com/grg.org.nz](https://www.facebook.com/grg.org.nz)

**Who would you trust...**



Have you set up an Enduring Power of Attorney? See page 8 for more information and make sure you don't wait until it's too late...



## Kate's Take! On the CEO's Desk this Month

The months of April to June are always busy times at the National Support Office with year end reporting, and masses of funding applications to various organisations to help support the work we do with grandparent and other whanau care families. This year has been no exception, and added into the mix we have been in recruitment mode and have had 83 new member families join the GRG whanau for support. On behalf of GRG welcome to you all! It is worth noting that all but one of these families needed a referral to our wonderful Tricia Corin for advice on income support issues, which is one of the most essential matters that needs resolution as quickly as possible in the caregiver journey. I will come back to this issue shortly, but before I do,

it is with great pleasure that I announce the appointment of two new members of staff to join our National Support Office team.

### National Support Office New Staff Appointments

#### National Support Office New Staff Appointments

**Merle Lambert** joins the team as our **National Support Coordinator**. In this role Merle will be supporting our nationwide network of volunteer Support Group Coordinators, including facilitating their training needs, local community support needs for groups and providing them with general supervision support. Merle has a strong background in advocacy and community development including support group planning, implementation and facilitation spanning over 17 years following 25 years' experience in customer service roles.

More recently Merle has worked as a *Kaituhono* (Change agent/Connector) for Healthy Families Far North with responsibility for contributing to the health and wellbeing of whanau living in the region; through activating change through social innovation involving research, co-design and experimentation. Merle has also worked as a Family/Whanau Support Worker Supporting Families in Mental Illness, as Health and Disability Advocate for the Nationwide Health and Disability Advocacy Service and as Lead Family Advisor (Mental Health Services Group) for the Waitemata District Health Board. Merle holds a Certificate in Supervision from Wellington Institute of Technology and a Bachelor of Health Sciences: Health Promotion from Auckland University of Technology. On behalf of us all, welcome Merle - to our team!



#### Appointment of New Community Outreach Advocate - Hannah Morris

We are also delighted to announce the appointment of Hannah Morris, who will take up the role as our Community Outreach advocate

based at our National Support Office. Hannah will be starting in early June and we look forward to having her on the team providing direct support to members on issues that may include Oranga Tamariki, mental health, Family Court, seeking support for traumatised children etc. I look forward to introducing Hannah in more detail in our next newsletter.

### Seeking Better Support for Grandparent Caregivers

In March I wrote to, and met with the Minister for Children, Tracey Martin. I raised our concerns about the ongoing phenomenon where **children are placed in grandparent or other whanau care following a family breakdown, and they are then left with little or no support provided to meet the reasonable needs of those children.**

There is no doubt that Oranga Tamariki is making positive changes in its approach to children in care and the support they and their caregivers need. It also takes time to implement changes in policies, processes and attitudes. However, in some cases there is still a lack of adequate or any support because of the Social Security legislation settings and in other cases it is the failure of Oranga Tamariki to put in place the support needed for the children who they have placed in care with their grandparents or other whanau.

I will outline the Minister's response to our concerns; but first let me explain the problems that arise because of the anomalies and inconsistencies that exist in our social welfare system, and how they that have adversely affected thousands of children and members of GRG over the years and continue to do so now.

#### The problem with the Social Security Legislation

To be eligible for the Unsupported Child Benefit (UCB) under the Social Security legislation, a caregiver must be "likely" to be the principal caregiver for at least one year, where there has

been a family breakdown and their parent(s) can't care for them.

That first year of care in particular, is an extremely traumatic and unsettling period for children and their caregivers as they grapple with the significant changes to everyday life which includes the increased economic costs of housing, food, clothing, schooling, transport, medical and legal costs on top of the emotional trauma, grief and anxiety that goes with it.

Yet it is common for grandparent caregivers' applications for the UCB to be declined in the first instance during this vulnerable time because a WINZ caseworker considers it unlikely for the children to still be with the grandparent for longer than a year. In these cases the caregiver receives nothing to help cover the costs of raising someone else's child. There is no welfare safety net for these children.

### **Oranga Tamariki Involvement**

In some cases Oranga Tamariki is involved and the social workers assert their belief that the children will be returned to their parents within the year; again leading to a WINZ decision to decline their UCB application. Again, the child has no financial support for their care and reasonable needs.

It is worth noting that Oranga Tamariki is not permitted under the law, to agree to a whanau placement of a child (for a period longer than 56 days) unless they are satisfied that the child would be returned to the parent (or usual caregiver).<sup>1</sup> If that's unlikely, Oranga Tamariki's Chief Executive should be seeking custody and guardianship orders for the children.

As will be familiar to many of our members the problems often faced by the parents that have led to the removal of their children in the first place; (e. g. substance/drug abuse, family harm, crime, mental health issues etc.), become the social worker's focus to resolve, in an effort to ensure the children can return to their parents' care.

This is laudable, except that these issues aren't usually resolved quickly and most extend beyond a year at least. During this period inadequate or no support is provided for the children themselves. The grandparent caregiver then struggles along trying desperately to make ends

meet while keeping a roof over the children's heads.

As a result, we too often see caregivers facing homelessness, unsuitable and sometimes dangerous and/or unhealthy transitional housing situations because they simply cannot afford their rent, have gone into arrears, and been evicted. In other cases grandparents have children placed with them in pensioner housing where it is against the terms of the tenancy, which also leads to eviction.

To make matters worse, it is also a startling and absurd reality that abusive and/or drug addicted parents often continue to receive income support entitlements that relate to the support for the children's living costs, even though the children have been removed from their care by the State!

In a recent case the social worker wrote a letter of support for an application for the UCB advising WINZ that our client would have the children in her care for six months, which of course did not meet the statutory one year threshold! In a Family Group Conference (FGC) the drug addicted parents were asked to forward payment for the children each week from their benefits to the grandmother. She is still waiting six months later!

### **So what support does OT provide for children in interim or short-term care placements with their grandparents if they can't get the UCB?**

The sad reality is either 'zip' or at best not much and in our experience - if you don't ask and ask repeatedly for help or have GRG advocate for you, you may not get anything.

Almost on a daily basis we have members in desperate circumstances trying to make ends meet while raising children (in some cases 4, 5, 6+ children) with little more than an adhoc offering of food, petrol or clothing vouchers from Oranga Tamariki to help cover the costs associated with their care. These vouchers don't pay for school costs, extra power, water, doctors and specialist costs.

Last week I learned of a grandmother who in 11 weeks of care, has had nothing but \$200 in food vouchers from Oranga Tamariki to help meet the costs of her three-month old granddaughter. As our Support Coordinator supporting her described it, "Cheapest foster carer in town!"



<sup>1</sup> Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, sections 140, 147



The disturbing fact is that she is not alone. There are hundreds of caregivers in similar situations.

### Does Oranga Tamariki have a duty to meet the child's reasonable needs?

In the majority of cases in practice where Oranga Tamariki has been involved in the decision to place a child with their grandparents (or other whanau), the caregiver does not receive anything close to, or equivalent to the financial support that they would receive if they were an "approved caregiver" or foster carer.

A lack of Government investment in this area has likely lead to this approach or current "practice" but it ignores the **statutory "duty [on the Chief Executive]... to ensure that payments... and any additional payments necessary to meet the reasonable needs of the child or young person are made to [the caregiver]."**<sup>1</sup> This duty also applies in cases where a section 139 or 140 "whanau agreement" has been made for the care of a child. This is because although the child is physically being cared for by the grandparent, the child is legally defined as being **"in the care of the Chief Executive"**.<sup>2</sup>

But again, in reality there is also a practice in which a social worker will, (early on following a Report of Concern about a child in need of care and protection), ask a grandparent to take on the care of their grandchildren without even completing the whanau agreement paperwork or seeking any orders or organising a follow up hui-a-whanau or FGC to formalise their care. In these cases the grandparents have no legal status as guardians (or as custodial caregivers) of the children and arguably neither does the Chief Executive.

### Where care is formalised via the Oranga Tamariki legislation (e.g. whanau agreement, custody or guardianship orders); how much is considered necessary to meet the reasonable needs of a child or young person?

The Oranga Tamariki legislation<sup>3</sup> itself prescribes the **minimum rate of payment to meet the reasonable needs of the child.** It is defined by Order in Council each year, i.e. as the rate paid via the Foster Care Allowance (FCA). There is also scope to make payments at a higher rate<sup>4</sup> than the FCA where there is special need.

<sup>1</sup> Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, section 363.

<sup>2</sup> Section 139

<sup>3</sup> Section 363 (1-8)

<sup>4</sup> Section 363 (3)

The base rate for the FCA is paid at the same rate as is paid to caregivers in receipt of the UCB or Orphan's Benefit. This base rate is approximately \$173 to 233 per week per child, depending upon the age of the child, with a clothing allowance providing an additional \$20-\$35 approx per week. UCB recipients are also entitled to a one-off establishment grant of \$350 per child, a School and Year Startup Payment in January of up to \$550 per child and eligibility to apply for up to \$2000 per year per child from the Extraordinary Care fund.

Approved foster carers are entitled to a range of additional allowances that may include specialist costs, uniforms, school camps, school stationery, club costs (sports and interest groups), school fees, early childhood fees, after school care fees and birthday and Christmas allowances.

So against that backdrop, let's consider again, our grandmother raising her 3-month old granddaughter on \$200 worth of food vouchers compared to the above costs that have been identified by Order in Council as being **"necessary to meet the reasonable needs of the child or young person."**



### Why is she not entitled to this support?

After all, the law says if she **has care via a whanau agreement** (or Oranga Tamariki have custody or guardianship orders in place), she is entitled to support to **meet the reasonable needs of the child** (plus additional costs if necessary).

It is a good question.

Unfortunately in practice, the rebuff often given by social workers in these cases is that she isn't an "approved caregiver". Grandparents are often fobbed off with more food, petrol or clothing vouchers.

They may not be officially classified within the Oranga Tamariki system as "approved caregivers", but that argument doesn't hold up when the legislation makes it clear that **"children in the care (or custody or guardianship) of the chief executive... may be placed in the care of any person (or organisation) whom the chief executive considers suitable to provide for that child's or young person's care, control, and upbringing."**<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Section 362

The Oranga Tamariki social worker's decision to place the child in her care, presumably means she has been identified as a **suitable** person to care for the child. Arguably at the very least, she has been provisionally approved as a caregiver and, by extension, it is not unreasonable to then expect that the child ought to have the minimum level of financial support as set out in the legislation.<sup>1</sup>

At some point, her grandmother might become officially approved (or be considered eligible for the UCB), but the key fact remains that in the meantime, **the baby in her care has the same needs as a baby of the same age placed in foster care who would receive this support.**

The establishment of Oranga Tamariki on 1 April 2017 signalled its direction and focus with the stated **"aim to put the needs of children at the heart of what [they] do."**<sup>2</sup> The Act itself requires that the **welfare and interests of the child** or young person **shall be the first and paramount consideration** having regard to the principles in sections 5 and 13 of the Act<sup>3</sup>. In applying this "child-centred and focused" approach to decisions about the welfare of a child in care, the legislation<sup>4</sup> also anticipates the provision of "support and assistance" that is "necessary" where a child is placed in whanau care. The qualifier to that requirement being "wherever practicable" it "should be provided"!

A reasonable person would accept that it is practicable and necessary for a bit more support and assistance to be provided to our grandmother raising her three-month old granddaughter than just \$200 worth of food vouchers. Wouldn't you think?

From 1 July 2019, the changes to the Oranga Tamariki legislation that haven't already come into effect, will be in force. The new section 4A makes this child-centred aim of Oranga Tamariki very clear i.e. that again having regard to the principles in sections 5 and 13, **"in all matters... the well-being and best interests of the child or young person are the first and paramount consideration."**

Going forward with this new focus on the "well-being and best interests" we are hopeful that our clients can expect there will be better support

for the children that Oranga Tamariki have placed in their care.

### New: National Care Standards

Another aspect of this approach will be the implementation of new **National Care Standards** which will also come into effect on 1 July 2019.

New Zealand does not currently have any national care standards that apply to all children in care. These new regulations are **"to prescribe the actions or steps that must be taken to help ensure children and young people in care or custody... receive an appropriate standard of care that is consistent with the principles of the Act."**<sup>5</sup>

In other words - the decisions made and the care they receive needs to ensure their well being and also be in their best interests.

These regulations also provide that **a child cannot be placed with a caregiver unless there has been an assessment of the prospective caregiver.** The assessment is prescriptive and will take time. An exception applies if the situation is urgent in which case the Chief Executive "may decide to grant the prospective caregiver provisional approval to care for a child or young person"<sup>6</sup>

In these cases, section 363 would also apply in prescribing the **support to meet the reasonable needs of the child.**

And what about our grandmother - who needs financial support for her infant grand-daughter? Arguably, under the new standards, she could and should expect that if the Chief Executive considers her to be the "suitable" person to care for the child in an urgent situation, she would be provisionally approved. In which case she could and should expect to receive reasonable support for the child's needs.

So why not now? The legislation already defines what is necessary to support the child's reasonable needs. **My question for Oranga Tamariki is why are hundreds and hundreds of grandparent caregivers being denied reasonable support for the children who have been placed in their care by Oranga Tamariki now? Will this be remedied when the new**



<sup>1</sup> Section 363

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/about-us/what-we-do/>

<sup>3</sup> Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, Section 6

<sup>4</sup> Section 13 (2) (d)

<sup>5</sup> 2018 Cabinet Paper: OT National Care Standard Regulation

<sup>6</sup>The Oranga Tamariki (National Care Standards and Related Matters) Regulations 2018, Regulations 47 and 51

National Care Standards are implemented? If not - why not?

### **Another Social Security Legislation Problem for Grandparent and Whanau Caregivers**

If our grandmother was a sole caregiver under the age of 65 she would be eligible for at least some support for the child as a dependent on a Sole Parent Support (SPS) benefit. Although the child would still miss out on the extra supports available to children on the UCB.

The previous Government were looking at changing the policy to enable SPS recipients with a child eligible for the UCB, to be paid a single rate of support for their own living costs plus the UCB for the child's needs.

The recent announcements by the Minister for Social Development, Carmel Sepuloni, did not address this issue when she released the Welfare Expert Advisory Group's report on 11 May 2019. We are raising it with the Ministry and we are hopeful that this policy will be positively reconsidered.

It would benefit many grandparent and other whanau caregivers who have had to give up their jobs and become the sole caregiver of an infant or young child following a family breakdown. Instead the law treats them as if they are their own child.

### **But would the SPS help our grandmother with her 3-month old granddaughter in any event?**

Unfortunately the answer is "NO" because she is a super annuitant receiving National Super payments. Other than support from Oranga Tamariki, she would only be entitled to financial support from the UCB if it could be established that she would be "likely" to be the caregiver for at least 12 months. In this case that hasn't happened.

Again I ask the question, how is it reasonable, for her to be expected to meet the "reasonable needs" of a three-month old over 11 weeks on just \$200 worth of food vouchers? How many tins of formula, packs of nappies, stretch n grows, can she afford not to mention the cost of bedding, a pram, infant car-seat and the cost of washing?

It isn't reasonable. It is disgraceful, but her circumstances are not uncommon and similar cases like this have been raised as examples with the Ministry to date. We look forward to the 2019/2020 Budget announcements and what it might mean in terms of the funding to better support children in care, as insufficient investment in this area has likely impacted on social workers' ability to make reasonable supports available to children where Oranga Tamariki is involved.

### **The Minister's Response to the issues**

The Minister for Children, Tracey Martin was sympathetic towards the plight of many grandparents during our meeting and she has since confirmed in a letter to me this month, her acknowledgment that; *"Caregivers fulfil a vital role in ensuring these children and young people have stable alternative homes."*

She also noted that the points we have raised *"are consistent with other long-standing issues that have been raised about the settings for financial assistance for caregivers. Changes to these payments have taken place over the years; however, changes have occurred in a piecemeal manner and have not always kept pace with societal changes. Our understanding of the needs of children and young people who cannot live with their parents has also evolved significantly. This is why, on 11 May 2019, I announced a fundamental review of the financial assistance provided to caregivers. The review will consider the Foster Care Allowance, Orphan's Benefit, Unsupported Child's Benefit, and their associated payments. It will also consider whether the current eligibility criteria are operating in a way that places the needs of the child at the centre of decision-making."*

The Minister also referred to her media release which can be found [here](#)<sup>1</sup> and she went on to say that *"Oranga Tamariki will lead the review, which will include talking with caregivers, care experienced young people and NGOs operating in the care system through June and into early July 2019."*

In our March-April Newsletter on page 3 we gave notice of the Survey of caregivers that is being conducted by Oranga Tamariki's Evidence Centre. The result of this review is scheduled to be reported back to Cabinet later this year. On our members' behalf and on behalf of grandparent and whanau caregivers nationally, we will be taking the opportunity to participate in this review and advocating for better support for the children in grandparent care who are missing out through no fault of their own.

We also encourage you to participate in the survey if you are approached for your views. Alternatively, if you have any views on the issues raised in this column you wish to share with us, please contact me on [CEO@grg.org.nz](mailto:CEO@grg.org.nz).

If you are in a similar situation to our member raising her three-month old and would like a referral to our Advocacy service, please contact us on 0800 472 637 or 09 418 3753 or email us at [office@grg.org.nz](mailto:office@grg.org.nz)

<sup>1</sup><https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/financial-support-foster-carers-be-reviewed>





## Advocating for You!

Tricia Corin

GRG Specialist Advocate on Benefits and Income Support

### Rates Rebates

Do you own your own home?

Are you struggling to pay your rates on top of the costs of raising your grandchildren? Did you know that **you may be eligible for a Rates Rebate of up to \$630 off your rates bill**. A Rates Rebates are only for people who own their own homes.

If the home is owned by a family trust and you are a named trustee, you must also be the person who pays the rates on the property. You must also be living in your home and listed as the ratepayer in the council's Rating Information Database - which has all the information about rates and ratepayers for every property in your local council's area.

We have found over the years that some of our grandparent members might own their own homes, but they are on very limited incomes (e.g. National Super) and struggle to pay these annual costs, which becomes even harder with a couple of extra hungry young grandchildren to feed and clothe!

You can only claim a Rates Rebate once a year and the **close off date is 30 June**.

**The application form to apply for a Rates Rebate can be downloaded [here](#).**

The instructions for getting your application witnessed and lodged with the council can be found on the NZ Government website [here](https://www.govt.nz/browse/housing-and-property/getting-help-with-housing/getting-a-rates-rebate/rates-rebate-application-form/).  
<https://www.govt.nz/browse/housing-and-property/getting-help-with-housing/getting-a-rates-rebate/rates-rebate-application-form/>

This application requires you to disclose your income. **PLEASE NOTE** that if you are in receipt of an Unsupported Child Benefit or Orphan's Benefit for the children in your care, this source of financial support for the children is **not** considered to be **your income** and should not be included in your statement of income for a rates rebate.

If you have already paid your rates in full and you are successful in your application for a rates rebate, you will receive a refund, otherwise you will receive a discounted rates notice.

### Winter Energy Payment

The **Winter Energy Payment** is currently being paid to eligible couples (\$31.82 per week) and people with dependent children (\$20.46 per week) again and is paid from 1 May to 1 October each year. You don't need to apply for the Winter

Energy Payment. If you are eligible, you will get it automatically with your other payments.

Eligible recipients includes people getting Jobseeker Support, Sole Parent Support, Supported Living Payment, Youth Payment, Young Parent Payment and Emergency Benefit.

Note: Seniors heading overseas over the winter months can keep getting Winter Energy Payment for up to 28 days while they're away. People should tell Work and Income if they plan to be away for more than four weeks, otherwise you might be paid too much and Work and Income will have to ask for the money back.

There's more information about the Winter Energy Payment on the Work and Income website [www.workandincome.govt.nz/winterenergypayment](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/winterenergypayment)

Please call us on **0800 472 637** or email me at [Tricia@grg.org.nz](mailto:Tricia@grg.org.nz) if you need advice or assistance on any of these issues.

### Are you raising someone else's child?

If you are **because there has been a breakdown in the child's family and you are likely to be their principal caregiver for at least 1 year** from the date you apply to Work and Income for this support then **you are entitled to this support to help with the costs of raising the child**.

The UCB is not taxable and is **not affected by your income or assets** as a caregiver. It is affected by any income the child might be receiving (e.g. ACC) and the child must be resident and present in NZ. To qualify for it you must also be over 18 years of age, resident and present in NZ for a continuous period of 12 months or more and you must not be a natural parent, an adoptive parent, or a step-parent of the child.

If these circumstances apply to you and you think you have been incorrectly advised or you realise now that you should be receiving this support, please contact me on [Tricia@grg.org.nz](mailto:Tricia@grg.org.nz) or our helpline on **0800 472 637** or call our National Support Office on 09 418 3753 for a referral to me.



## The Importance of Setting Up an Enduring Power of Attorney

Q. What do your cat, your car, your home, your heirloom jewellery and your health have in common?

A. They are all things that you want to be sure are looked after if you are unable to.

Few of us want to think about something happening to us that might impact on our ability to make sound decisions. The reality is, we can't predict what's going to happen in life that may impact on our health or wellbeing.

Something we can plan for, is having someone in place to make decisions for you if you can't make them for yourself. **This is called having an Enduring Power of Attorney (EPA).**

Having an EPA means you can decide, ahead of time, who you trust to look after the things that are precious to you.

### There are two types of EPA:

**Property:** This EPA covers decisions about money and assets and can be put into effect at any time. More than one attorney can be chosen for this EPA.

**Personal care and welfare:** This EPA covers decisions about your health, accommodation and care. It comes into effect only if a medical professional or Family Court decides a person is 'mentally incapable'. Only one attorney can be selected for this EPA.

Money, health, assets, pets - they're important to us. So it's important to choose your attorney wisely - you want to be sure that your wishes and feelings are respected. Think about a friend or family member, a work colleague or even a trustee corporation like the Public Trust.

It does take time and money to set up an EPA - but the investment is worth it. Sickness or

injury can happen at any time - knowing that someone can make important decisions on your behalf is investing in peace of mind, for you and your family.

You can find out more about setting up an EPA as well find the forms at the SuperSeniors website [www.superseniors.msd.govt.nz](http://www.superseniors.msd.govt.nz).

As part of the campaign we also have special SuperGold Card offers on legal services to help reduce the cost of setting up an EPA. A list of the participating providers are listed below.

**You can also find other SuperGold Card offers at [www.supergold.govt.nz/directory](http://www.supergold.govt.nz/directory) which can provide discounts for legal services and setting up an EPA.**

Don't leave it until later. Think about the things you care about, who you will entrust to care about them too?

### Special SuperGold Card offers

Reuben & McGeachie Law (Auckland)

- 09 835 1520

Nigel L Faigan Solicitor (Auckland)

- 09 307 1242

Michael Hunwick Lawyer (Hamilton)

- 07 8537623

Rainey Collins Lawyers (Wellington)

- 04 473 6850 | 0800 733 424

Pier Law

- (Kaiapoi: 03 327 0590 New Brighton 03 388 1639 and Styx Mill Christchurch 03 366 5540)

Williams McKenzie Lawyers (Rangiora)

- 03 313-7086

Russell Moon & Fail Lawyers (Ashburton)

- 03 308-3191

Marks & Worth Lawyers and IP Specialists (Dunedin)

- 03 474 9272

McCrimmon Law (Dunedin)

- 03 474 0003

Anja Klinkert Lawyer and Mediator (Dunedin)

- 03 477 7267







# what a grand idea!

## Extraordinary Care Fund Dates for Funding Rounds in 2019

The June 2019 funding round closes on 21 June, but if you missed this round, please make sure you get your application ready for the next round that **closes on 18 October 2019**. If you are unsuccessful in one round, you can reapply. You can submit your application at any time before the next funding round closing date to be considered.

### If you apply before: You will hear back by:

15 February 2019	29 March 2019
1 June 2019	2 August 2019
18 October 2019	3 December 2019

See our website at [www.grg.org.nz](http://www.grg.org.nz) for more information and guidelines for making an application. If you have further questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at 0800 472 637 or 09 418 3753 or email us at [office@grg.org.nz](mailto:office@grg.org.nz)

## Can we help you?

Members ONLY services are available free of charge nationwide

New members and existing members please call our Helpline 0800 GRANDS (0800 472 637) or 09 418 3753

Or Join GRG via our website at [www.grg.org.nz](http://www.grg.org.nz)  
Or click the Join GRG button below

**JOIN GRG**

**Office Administrator:**  
09 418 3753  
Email: [office@grg.org.nz](mailto:office@grg.org.nz)

**Chief Executive:**  
Kate Bundle 027 2446763  
Email: [kate@grg.org.nz](mailto:kate@grg.org.nz)  
**GRG Trust NZ**  
**PO Box 34892**  
**Birkenhead**  
**Auckland 0746**

**National Support Office**  
**Unit C**  
**Chelsea Business Park**  
**162 Mokoia Road**  
**Birkenhead Auckland**  
**0626**

Our Office Hours are 9am to 2pm Monday to Friday

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ is a registered charity (CC20205) providing nationwide and local support focused on supporting and empowering grandparent

and whanau caregiver families to achieve positive life outcomes for the children and young people in their care

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter or you have changed address please update your details by contacting the GRG 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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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. *He rōpū manaaki, he rōpū whakarongo, he rōpū ako mātou*  
We are respectful, we listen, we learn.

Please pass this newsletter on to other grandparents/kin caregivers you know who need support

**Donate to GRG**

Give a little to GRG via our secure DPS payment system on our website at [www.GRG.org.nz](http://www.GRG.org.nz) at or at [Givealittle.co.nz/org/grg](http://Givealittle.co.nz/org/grg)

**givealittle**  
from the Spark Foundation

Thank you to Suncorp our **Community Partner** and to our generous Sponsors, Funders and private donors supporting GRG's Support Services, Information Resources and Carer Education programmes throughout New Zealand, including this newsletter.





## GRG Support & Coffee Groups Nationwide

Note: Meetings are held during school terms - with public and school holidays excluded unless otherwise specified.

### Kaitaia & Kerikeri

**Contact:** Martha Taonui 022 050 7056 / [kaitaia@grg.org.nz](mailto:kaitaia@grg.org.nz)

**Meets:** First Friday of each month, 10:30am-12:00pm.

**Location:** Varies - please get in touch with Martha for confirmation of the next meeting.

### Whangarei

**Contact:** Lianne Nicholas 09 459 5910 / [whangarei@grg.org.nz](mailto:whangarei@grg.org.nz)

**Meets:** First Friday of each month, 10:00am-12:00pm.

**Location:** Anglican Care Centre, corner of Mill Road & Deveron Street, Whangarei.

### Waitakere

**Contact:** Esther Price 021 251 0690 / [waitakere@grg.org.nz](mailto:waitakere@grg.org.nz)

**Meets:** Third Thursday of each month, from 10:00am.

**Location:** Terence Kennedy House Hall, 267 Glengarry Road, Glen Eden, Auckland.

### Papakura, Pukekohe & Waiuku

**Contact:** Anne Doddrell 09 237 8161 / [pukekohe@grg.org.nz](mailto:pukekohe@grg.org.nz) or Shirley Afoa 021 129 4151 / [papakura@grg.org.nz](mailto:papakura@grg.org.nz)

**Meets:** Last Tuesday of each month, 10:00am-12:00pm.

**Location:** St. Andrews Church, 43 Queen Street, Pukekohe, Auckland.

### Te Puke & Papamoa

**Contact:** Rawinia McCredie 07 562 2850 / [tepuke@grg.org.nz](mailto:tepuke@grg.org.nz)

**Meets:** First Monday of each month from March to December from 10:30am.

**Location:** Empowerment NZ, 32 Jocelyn Street, Te Puke.

### Te Awamutu

**Contact:** Ruth Gilling 022 045 4475 / [teawamutu@grg.org.nz](mailto:teawamutu@grg.org.nz)

**Meets:** Second Monday of each month, 9:30am-11:30am.

**Location:** Varies - please get in touch with Ruth for confirmation of the next meeting.

### Turangi

**Contact:** Charmaine Timihou 027 645 2002 / [turangi@grg.org.nz](mailto:turangi@grg.org.nz)

**Meets:** Varies - please get in touch with Charmaine for confirmation of the next meeting.

**Location:** Varies - please get in touch with Charmaine for confirmation of the next meeting.

### Kaikohe

**Contact:** Moengaroa Floyed 09 401 3057 / [kaikohe@grg.org.nz](mailto:kaikohe@grg.org.nz)

**Meets:** Varies - please get in touch with Moe for confirmation of the next meeting.

**Location:** Varies - please get in touch with Moe for confirmation of the next meeting.

### Ruakaka

**Contact:** Tauser Kingi 09 432 8611 / [ruakaka@grg.org.nz](mailto:ruakaka@grg.org.nz)

**Meets:** Varies - please get in touch with Tauser for confirmation of the next meeting.

**Location:** Varies - please get in touch with Tauser for confirmation of the next meeting.

### New Lynn

**Contact:** Robyn Robertson 021 309 365 / [newlynn@grg.org.nz](mailto:newlynn@grg.org.nz)

**Meets:** Third Tuesday of each month, from 10:00am.

**Location:** House of Prayer, 9B Binsted Road, New Lynn, Auckland.

### Hamilton & Huntly

**Contact:** Pat Davis 07 855 0530 / [hamilton@grg.org.nz](mailto:hamilton@grg.org.nz)

**Meets:** Last Monday of each month, 10:00am-12:00pm.

**Location:** St. David's Hall, 160 Rifle Range Rd, Frankton, Hamilton.

### Opotiki

**Contact:** Sophie Wilson-Kahika 07 262 5136 / [opotiki@grg.org.nz](mailto:opotiki@grg.org.nz)

**Meets:** Varies - please get in touch with Sophie for confirmation of the next meeting.

**Location:** Varies - please get in touch with Sophie for confirmation of the next meeting.

### Te Kuiti

**Contact:** Kay Higgins 027 430 2939 / [tekuiti@grg.org.nz](mailto:tekuiti@grg.org.nz)

**Meets:** Third Wednesday of each month from 10:00am.

**Location:** Tiffany's Café, 241 Rora Street, Te Kuiti.

### Gisborne

Currently vacant. If you or someone you know would like to consider becoming the local Support Group Coordinator for Gisborne, please contact Merle Lambert at [merle@grg.org.nz](mailto:merle@grg.org.nz)

### Dargaville

**Contact:** Sandy Zimmer 09 439 4420 / [dargaville@grg.org.nz](mailto:dargaville@grg.org.nz)

**Meets:** Varies - please get in touch with Sandy for confirmation of the next meeting.

**Location:** Northern Wairoa Boating Club, Totara Street, Dargaville.

### East Auckland / Tamaki

**Contact:** Tess Gould-Thorpe 09 535 6903 / [tamaki@grg.org.nz](mailto:tamaki@grg.org.nz)

**Meets:** Varies - please get in touch with Tess for confirmation of the next meeting.

**Location:** Dunkirk Road Activity Centre, 50 Dunkirk Road, Panmure, Auckland.

### South Auckland

**Contact:** Virginia Peebles 09 277 7514 / [southauckland@grg.org.nz](mailto:southauckland@grg.org.nz)

**Meets:** Varies - please get in touch with Virginia for confirmation of the next meeting.

**Location:** Varies - please get in touch with Virginia for confirmation of the next meeting.

### Tauranga

Currently vacant. If you or someone you know would like to consider becoming the local Support Group Coordinator for Tauranga, please contact Merle Lambert at [merle@grg.org.nz](mailto:merle@grg.org.nz)

### Rotorua

**Contact:** Anne Donnell 021 309 365 / [rotorua@grg.org.nz](mailto:rotorua@grg.org.nz)

**Meets:** Third Monday of each month, 9:30am-12:00pm.

**Location:** Linton Park Community Centre, 16 Kamahi Place, Pukehangi, Rotorua.

### Taupo

**Contact:** Lesley-Anne Wells 07 377 3539 / [taupo@grg.org.nz](mailto:taupo@grg.org.nz)

**Meets:** Varies - please get in touch with Lesley-Anne for confirmation of the next meeting.

**Location:** Varies - please get in touch with Lesley-Anne for confirmation of the next meeting.

### Taumarunui

**Contact:** Jo Wickham 07 896 7515 / [taumarunui@grg.org.nz](mailto:taumarunui@grg.org.nz)

**Meets:** First Monday of each month, 10:00am-12:00pm.

**Location:** Taumarunui RSA, 10 Marae Street, Taumarunui.



### Taranaki

Currently vacant. If you or someone you know would like to consider becoming the local Support Group Coordinator for Taranaki, please contact Merle Lambert at [merle@grg.org.nz](mailto:merle@grg.org.nz)

### Whanganui

**Contact:** Jenny Morton 06 344 3656 or 027 443 7780 or [whanganui@grg.org.nz](mailto:whanganui@grg.org.nz)  
**Meets:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month  
**Location:** Varies - please get in touch with Jenny for confirmation of the next meeting.

### Levin

**Contact:** Ann Waddell 06 362 7269 / [levin@grg.org.nz](mailto:levin@grg.org.nz)  
**Meets:** Varies – please get in touch with Ann for confirmation of the next meeting.  
**Location:** Varies – please get in touch with Ann for confirmation of the next meeting.

### Hutt Valley

**Contact:** Serenah Nicholson 021 743 414/ [huttvalley@grg.org.nz](mailto:huttvalley@grg.org.nz)  
**Meets:** First Friday of each month, from 9:30am-11:30am.  
**Location:** Pomare Community House, 55 Farmer Crescent, Taita, Lower Hutt.

### Motueka

**Contact:** Rankeilor Arnott 03 528 5089 / [motueka@grg.org.nz](mailto:motueka@grg.org.nz)  
**Meets:** Second and fourth Tuesday of each month, 1:00pm-3:00pm.  
**Location:** St Andrews Church, 64 High Street, Motueka.

### North Otago

**Contact:** Margaret Pink 03 434 7233 / [northotago@grg.org.nz](mailto:northotago@grg.org.nz)  
**Meets:** Varies – please get in touch with Margaret for confirmation of the next meeting.  
**Location:** Varies – please get in touch with Margaret for confirmation of the next meeting.

### Southland

**Contact:** Lynette Nielsen 027 489 2581 / [southland@grg.org.nz](mailto:southland@grg.org.nz)  
**Meets:** Fortnightly on a Wednesday at 10:00am.  
**Location:** Family Works, 183 Spey Street, Invercargill.

### Other areas

If your area is not included and you or someone you know would like to consider becoming the local Support Group Coordinator for your area, please contact Merle Lambert at [merle@grg.org.nz](mailto:merle@grg.org.nz)

### Napier

**Contact:** Rozane Duncan 027 901 2021 / [napier@grg.org.nz](mailto:napier@grg.org.nz)  
**Meets:** First Friday of each month from 10:30am.  
**Location:** Napier RSA, 34 Vautier Street, Napier.

### Dannevirke

**Contact:** Connie Peters 027 488 3415 / [tararua@grg.org.nz](mailto:tararua@grg.org.nz)  
**Meets:** Varies – please get in touch with Connie for confirmation of the next meeting.  
**Location:** Varies – please get in touch with Connie for confirmation of the next meeting.

### Wairarapa

**Contact:** Tere Lenihan 021 509 493 / [wairarapa@grg.org.nz](mailto:wairarapa@grg.org.nz)  
**Meets:** Varies – please get in touch with Tere for confirmation of the next meeting.  
**Location:** Varies – please get in touch with Tere for confirmation of the next meeting.

### Wellington

**Contact:** Cecilee Donovan 04 477 0632 / [wellington@grg.org.nz](mailto:wellington@grg.org.nz)  
**Meets:** Varies – please get in touch with Cecilee for confirmation of the next meeting.  
**Location:** Varies – please get in touch with Cecilee for confirmation of the next meeting.

### Canterbury

**Contact:** Veronica Brunt / 03 942 5935 / [canterbury@grg.org.nz](mailto:canterbury@grg.org.nz)  
**Meets:** Varies – please get in touch with Veronica for confirmation of the next meeting.  
**Location:** Varies – please get in touch with Veronica for confirmation of the next meeting.

### Otago Coastal

Currently vacant. If you or someone you know would like to consider becoming the local Support Group Coordinator for the Otago Coastal area, please contact Merle Lambert at [merle@grg.org.nz](mailto:merle@grg.org.nz)

### Hastings

**Contact:** Tom Kupa 06 879 4302 / [hastings@grg.org.nz](mailto:hastings@grg.org.nz)  
**Meets:** Varies – please get in touch with Tom for confirmation of the next meeting. **Location:** Varies – please get in touch with Tom for confirmation of the next meeting.

### Palmerston North

**Contact:** Jacqui Phillips 021 229 0455 / [palmerstonnorth@grg.org.nz](mailto:palmerstonnorth@grg.org.nz)  
**Meets:** Alternates between the first Thursday from 5:30pm and the first Tuesday from 9:30am each month.  
**Location:** The Evelyn Rawlins Room, Square Edge Creative Centre, 47 The Square, Palmerston North.

### Porirua

**Contact:** Roma Paull 022 050 4761 / [porirua@grg.org.nz](mailto:porirua@grg.org.nz)  
**Meets:** Second Wednesday of each month, 10:00am-12:00pm.  
**Location:** First floor, Connect Global Office, 1 Walton Leigh Avenue, Porirua.

### Nelson

**Contact:** Paula Eggers 021 062 6583 / [nelson@grg.org.nz](mailto:nelson@grg.org.nz)  
**Meets:** Fortnightly on a Tuesday.  
**Location:** Varies – please get in touch with Paula for confirmation of the next meeting.

### East Christchurch

**Contact:** Anna Clare 021 085 77404 / [eastchristchurch@grg.org.nz](mailto:eastchristchurch@grg.org.nz)  
**Meets:** First and third Friday of each month, from 10:00am.  
**Location:** Holy Trinity Avonside, 168 Stanmore Road, Richmond, Christchurch.

### Dunedin

**Contact:** Mike Stanley 027 205 5767 / [dunedin@grg.org.nz](mailto:dunedin@grg.org.nz)  
**Meets:** Varies – please get in touch with Mike for confirmation of the next meeting.  
**Location:** Varies – please get in touch with Mike for confirmation of the next meeting.

### Coffee Groups

Matakana/Warkworth	Anita	021 082 05563
North Shore	Val	022 080 2368
Auckland Central	Jane	021 424 801
Hamilton	Carol	027 361 1929
Cambridge	Brenda	027 438 5401
Raetihi	Angel	06 385 3404
Kapiti	Margaret	04 293 4728
Upper Hutt	Margaret	04 976 9475
Blenheim	Juliet	03 571 6222
Christchurch	Elaine	021 025 08834
Ashburton	Deborah	027 626 4866