



Newsletter June 2013



Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ Mitre 10 Community of the year.

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



Data base: 5375 Whanau Carers.

From the National Office:

Your voices:

A mum speaks:

I would like to just say thank you to GRG for being there for my mum who took on my three children over ten years ago as I was lost in world of drugs, violence and crime. But without the GRG I not sure she could of managed without your support an advice, it's been three years that I been clean and away from that life and have custody back of my two boys and life's been great, I just wanted to say again thank you for being there for my mum when she needed the love and support to get thru the rough days...Her name is Denise Henman an she is my Angel whom I love and respect for bringing up my babies and being most amazing woman I know.. And to all Grandparents out their raising their Grandchildren you are all Angels. Mum: well ,her oldest one Dee, who she took on as foster child has just left this year to go study law at Victoria university and mum still has my youngest daughter Shan, but I know there so many grandparents raising grandchildren whose lives been destroyed by the destruction of P, but I want you all to know there is hope I made it out after ten years and have a long way to go to earn the respect and trust of my children back, but I am on the right road now...and God bless all you amazing Grandparents!! Muwah xxxx...xxx

In the 14 years of doing this job until this message I have only heard from 1 other Mum, in similar circumstances. I am absolutely thrilled to hear you are doing so well, many congratulations. Di

"Cherish youth, but trust old age." --Pueblo proverb

Opps:

So Nan T gives me my bottle and then I cough and burp all at the same time..... Opps Nan T's gotta wash her and Papa Mikes feather duvet but that's ok, these things happen say's Nan T.

THEN..... I go back to my cot (cos I usually have another moi after my bottle) BUT, this morning I wanted to play for a while before going back to moi..... I played with my nappy AND it came off and I didn't know how to put it back on, Mmm a real Moko dilemma on my hands..... Opps again, I peed all over the floor and all over every blanket in my cot. When Nan T came in to check on me she looked boarder line grumpy and just stood there..... THEN, I gave her my great big smile..... I think it worked. :-)



What happened?

He entered my life as a new born, next month he turns 11. He is taller than me now standing at 5 ft 7inches, size 9 shoes and 14-16 year sized clothing, he is not plump by any stretch of ones imagination, AND his voice has dropped, none of the squeakiness either, one day normal and next day I thought there was some strange man in our home. Pimples cover his once clear skin and he is not yet at Intermediate! Oh my, this is way too young! He is funny, polite and I love him too bits.

Two and a half years ago we got in touch with GRG as we had recently been given temporary custody of our twin grandchildren, Liam and Sharisse. GRG was a brilliant godsend and that year we attended the conference at Ellerslie.

I am happy to say we are getting on with the job of raising them and they will attend school in October this year.

Although it has been a challenge for my wife and me, the lemonade is flowing from this lemon tree and the new family dynamic is grounded in routine. Thank you again to you and your team and the organization of GRG.

Poppa

As the years go by and we watch our little ones grow to be fine young men or woman. It isn't a sad thought one day they leave, but a good thought they will have a good start to life, I have noticed the differences with growing grandchildren and your own siblings that you get a chance to get things right from the first time just as the children get a better chance at life. I always tend to believe things get better not bitter. But it's giving that love to your grandchildren and that one day they may meet their real parents and share the love. I always tell my grandkids it's not what they know will get them through but who you know, does. Keep their shoes clean smile

on their dial and always have a nice word to say to someone if you don't, do not speak, and never be a afraid to work hard and dirty your hands doing it, take life for what it is not what you want out of it. *God bless you all.*

Press Release by New Zealand Government at 3:03PM, 16 May 2013

Funding of \$35 million over four years has been set aside in contingency for extended family members caring for children, recognising the difficult job they do.

More than 12,000 New Zealand children are being cared for by wider family members because of the death of a parent or family breakdown, Social Development Minister Paula Bennett says.

"We know they are doing a tough job, often on limited incomes with children who need extra attention and help, and we're determined to support that. "Without these carers, more children would need to be in state care."

As part of the White Paper on Vulnerable Children, Mrs Bennett signalled additional financial help would be made available for carers receiving the unsupported child benefit and orphan's benefit.

"This funding will improve the support available to kin carers and grandparents raising grandchildren," Mrs Bennett says.

A ministerial reference group has been established to provide further advice to the minister.

"We've invited Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, a foster care representative, and other experts to tell us how they think these funds could best be utilised," Mrs Bennett says. "These groups know better than anyone what would make the most difference."

The Ministerial Reference Group will report back to Mrs Bennett in August. ENDS

GRG Press release:

Extra \$35m for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: Thursday, 16 May 2013, 6:37 pm Press Release: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Thursday May 16th 2013

Extra \$35m for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

In the Budget presented today the Government has allocated funding of \$35 million over four years for extended family members caring for children, recognising the difficult job they do.

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"This funding will improve the support available to kin carers and grandparents raising grandchildren," Mrs Bennett says.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren CEO Geoff Lawson says "we are highly delighted that grandparents and other whanau caregivers who step up to care for children who are not been raised by their parents due to family breakdown have finally been recognised for the difficult role they fulfil on very limited income. For too long now they have been the poor cousins.

We are also very pleased that GRG's Founder Di Vivian will be on the Ministerial Reference Group that will sort out how the funds will be allocated." Ends

What extra benefits will mean for this grandma:



Media: Helen Christian would be grateful for any extra cash to help with the fulltime care of her three grandchildren.

The 51-year-old is among those who may benefit from a government plan to give people like her financial assistance. The idea is being explored by a new ministerial reference group sanctioned by Social Development Minister Paula Bennett.

Members will include a representative from Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ - an organisation with a membership of 5320.

The Trust has been a big help to Ms Christian whose eldest daughter Jackie Allister died at her Pakuranga Auckland, home just over two years ago in a domestic incident. Jackie's partner committed suicide that night. Ms Christian picked up Jackie's three children from the police station a few hours later and has been the sole carer of a "traumatised" 11, 9 and 5-year-old ever since.

She also cares for her other daughter Sarah. The Botany Downs Kindergarten teacher says she is lucky to be young enough to work and not rely on a pension. "It can be hard juggling work. Next term I am going to cut back hours because the kids need extra-curricular activities just as much as any other children.

"It's been a hard two years, the children have a lot of trauma, a lot of needs and quite often we take one step forward and two steps back."

Ms Christian says she often struggles to watch television because programmes trigger memories of Jackie and her death. "When we see things on the news it sometimes sends everybody backwards but then we can't have the news on," she says.

"Talking about it helps though. We have a picture of her by the dining room table and talk about our day and about her." Ms Christian has had little time to mourn the loss of her 26-year-old daughter and close friend. "My priority has been the children. It was just straight away looking after the children and being strong for them. It's all right to cry but I can't do that 24/7."

She says there are a lot of grandparents who just scrape by and she believes the extra funding will make it easier for them and their grandchildren to get through the trauma. "Hopefully it means the children can become outstanding members of the community no matter what their circumstances may be."

What is Conductive Education?

Conductive Education Nationwide is a unique form of special education and rehabilitation, which is beneficial for children and adults with motor disorders. By this we mean any disorder of movement control originating from injury to the brain or another part of the central nervous system. This injury may have occurred before, during or after birth or as a result of an accident, disease or stroke later in life.

Conductive Education is particularly effective for children with Cerebral Palsy, dyspraxia or Spina Bifida and for adults with Parkinson's disease, Multiple Sclerosis, Paraplegia and after-stroke conditions.

People, who live with any of these conditions, experience difficulties with co-ordinating and controlling their movements. Associated problems often include communication difficulties and sensory impairment. Motor disorders, particularly when they have been present from birth can also lead to general developmental delay, because individuals aren't able to access stimulating experiences from which to learn.

Conductive Education aims to address all of these problems in a holistic way and teaches people to overcome their difficulties so they could live more independent lives.

Conductive Education is a learning process and not a treatment or therapy. The participants are learning components of skills, which are needed to meet the challenges of everyday life. They are active participants in the learning process and not recipients of a treatment. Conductive Education is a partnership between educator and learners to create circumstances for learning.

[Principles of Conductive Education](#)
[Aims of Conductive Education](#)
[Elements of Conductive Education](#)
[Profile of the Professional Conductor Working in New Zealand](#)

New Zealand Foundation for Conductive Education

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<http://www.conductive-education.org.nz/whatisconductiveed.htm>

Jaidon (6 years)

We do not always experience 'highs' when raising our little ones but we are so proud of Jaidon (6 years), our eldest.

He was accepted into tackle rugby at North Harbour Junior Rugby with the J6 Marist Team (Wild Leopards). He started out feeling his way through practices and matches, Then on 28 April received his first award for best effort.

Jaidon plays in the position of no 1, prop for his team.



He was made captain of the team on Saturday, and also received an award for best try and improved tackle. They were

up against Kumeu. Marist won 10-6.

Jaidon was also thanked by his coach for leading the team by setting a good example with his behaviour in play. The coach also mentioned Jaidon to be someone that will go from strength to strength.

We are so proud of him!

Grandma M

Grandmas & Grandkids

An elderly woman and her little grandson, whose face was sprinkled with bright freckles, spent the day at the zoo. Lots of children were waiting in line to get their cheeks painted by a local artist who was decorating them with tiger paws.

"You've got so many freckles, there's no place to paint!" a girl in the line said to the little fella. Embarrassed, the little boy dropped his head.



His grandmother knelt down next to him "I love your freckles. When I was a little girl I always wanted freckles, she said, while tracing her finger across the child's cheek. "Freckles are beautiful!"

The boy looked up, "Really?"

"Of course," said the grandmother. "Why, just name me one thing that's prettier than freckles."

The little boy thought for a moment, peered intensely into his grandma's face, and softly whispered, "Wrinkles."

Jessie: A recent story I had with Jessie is with regards to the police. Before he came to my care he was living in an environment where the police were not liked, and people were vocal about this. So I have been working on him learning that the police are nice people who we go to for help. One morning we were driving to work/school/daycare and a police car went past, I again spoke about how the police help us... he replied... "Nana they can help fix our hole in the bathroom wall!" Days earlier he had decided to use the towel rail like a monkey bar- pulling it out of the wall with a big chunk of gib - but now thinks we can get the police to come and fix it up for us!

Nan Shells



The GRG Members Training Conference initially set for November 20th/21st this year has been re-scheduled to March 5th/6th 2014 and it will be in Auckland at a venue yet to be determined. So pop the dates in your diary; there'll be more details to follow.

From the USA:



Dearest Di and GRG members;

I live in the United States and have been receiving the GRG Newsletter for a few years now. I absolutely love it! Although it is sad that it seems the same situation is occurring around the world, with many parents turning to drugs and alcohol and causing family members to raise the little ones, it is comforting to hear all of the stories in the newsletter. It is heart-warming to see the love and sacrifices of all the members toward the children.

My husband and I too are raising our grandchildren, ages 9 and 11. We have had them since ages 3 and 5. They are the light of our lives (although some days we feel like they will be the death of us!!) and cannot imagine our lives without them. Our daughter struggles daily with her drug addiction and is in and out of our lives. Their

father left when the youngest was 1 and doesn't attempt to see them. Our hearts have ached for these children and how the abandonment has caused them pain. But they are thriving now and will soon be on summer vacation at the end of this school year.

I have witnessed first-hand dealing with Child Protective Services, with our court system and the endless red tape to get our grandchildren out of a dangerous situation and into a safe home. It took us years of calling and complaining until we were finally heard and the children removed from our daughter's custody. It is disappointing to see it happens at your end of the world too. The court system tends to think keeping children with their parent(s) is the best for the child but I beg to differ!! Sometimes, it is the worst the children can experience. It is also maddening to me that there is no reprimanding parents who choose drugs or a single life over raising the children they brought onto the earth! There has been no punishment or intervention by our local or state governments on our daughter or our ex-son-in-law over abandoning their children. The tax-payers, us included, are stuck footing the bill for medical care and many other expenses. We receive a small stipend monthly (\$366/month for no more than 5 years) which doesn't begin to pay for food, clothing, school fees, school supplies, nor the large amount of electricity used because these kids tend to leave every light, appliance and television on when they leave a room!! Hahaha!! So it all comes down to **LOVE**. GRG members, their families, our families and my husband and I are all providing much more than basics to these children. We are providing unconditional **LOVE** to them. God has blessed them all with having all of us in their lives, but I am sure we all feel like we are so very blessed in return by having the opportunities of providing **LOVE** for them.

We may not have much money or fancy things to give these children, but all of our stories have had **LOVE** in common. I want to tell all of the GRG members that on those days when you are broke, exhausted and don't know for what you have the strength to do next, you always provide LOVE. It's free. It's nearly effortless and takes no time at all to show.

God bless each and every one of you for the love and sacrifices you have given your children. Keep up the great work and keep the stories coming! *Patricia S., U.S.A*

In Regard to credit cards: (Last newsletter)

Our 'little darlings' aged 14 and 15 had a really nice time with our card. The 14 year old had been allowed to purchase a game online. He then went on to spend \$360 worth. His brother [who lives with their father] was obviously a bit envious and copied down our visa number when 14 year old visited. 15 year old purchased to the tune of \$1500 in a very short time so it went undetected. Obviously everything was shut down as soon as we found it. This all took place from 21 December 2012 to 6 January 2013 when we were involved with a number of other things and maybe not paying the attention we should have been.

The only way to handle this 'theft' is to lay a complaint with the police, which we have done. Here we practice 'Tuff Love'. They are fully aware and know they will

have to do something to make this good, maybe community service. This will be discussed in an alternative action process with the police. *Grand's in Hamilton*

Giant bubble recipe:

Create some gigantic bubbles using a wand (we improvised from a wire coat hanger) Here's how to do it: Mix 2 cups water with two-thirds cup of dishwashing detergent and one-fourth cup white corn syrup. Pour into a large flat container like a pizza pan. My grandson adds these tips for success: When removing the wand from the solution, use a rocking motion to keep the bubble from breaking. Move the wand backward so that the bubble doesn't strike your knuckles and break. Use a slow flip of the wrist to separate the forming bubble from the wand. Oohs and aahs are certain to follow. *(You can substitute Corn Syrup by making a sugar syrup with 1-1/4 cups sugar and 1/3 cup water, boiled together until syrupy.)*



Hokitika/Greymouth/Reefton members

'Hi my name is Jill. I belong to Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, having been raising my grandchildren for 12 years. I live in the small town of Hokitika and at times I have felt isolated and alone. I would love to meet other grandparents who are also raising their grandchildren to have coffee and a chat. My contact details are: PH (03) 755 7180; Mobile 0273 111 598. Look forward to hearing from you. Jill.'



[Give A Little](http://givealittle.co.nz) for GRG



Anti-bullying.



0800 456 450

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

Can we help you? Members ONLY Services Nationwide
Toll free line 0800 472 637 (Caregivers only please)

Members support Manager: Di Vivian New members and general information ext. 1

Field Officers:

Sharon ext. 2

Sharon is a counselor with 25 years' experience. She has specific experience in working with families and the challenges of parenting, including children who have experienced trauma and issues of grief/loss for grandparent/kin carers and their families who are also parents, siblings

of the original parents of the children in their care. She can assist with Family Group Conference's or Strengthening families as a support person when practical or give advice via telephone. **Auckland callers use 09 419 0045 11am - 5pm Monday & Friday only**

Nola Adams: ext. 3

Telephone advice can be given on the following topics Justice and Prison system, including Youth Court. Family Court applications: for persons wishing to self-represent: Child Youth and Family representation where practicable/advice. Disability advice and the Schooling system. Nola can be contacted on **06 845 3141 (Hawkes Bay callers) Monday to Friday 9am – 4pm.**

Diana East: ext. 4

In depth knowledge on issues impacting on grandparents raising grandchildren; has many years working with mental health consumers and carers. This gives her a very good understanding of a wide range of mental health issues and issues effecting grandparents raising. **Hours 9am – 5pm 04 970 8177 (Wellington callers)**

Tricia Corin: ext. 5

Is a Beneficiaries Advocate, If you are having problems with your Benefits from Work and Income / Inland Revenue or are unsure if you are on the right Benefit, needing advice on UCB or DPB, Disabilities Allowance or recoverable and non-recoverable advances . **Hours 11am 5pm 07 8685490 (Waikato callers)**

Please note that our Field Officers are Part Time

Disclaimer: Any article, services offered may not have an endorsement from Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ, discretion is advised.

Please feel free to send/email this report on to others whom you think may be interested.

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

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

Views expressed in this newsletter may not be the views of the GRG Trust.

We are a voluntary not-for-profit organisation.

All donations to the GRG Trust are tax deductible.

www.grg.org.nz or www.kin.org.nz or www.raisinggrandchildren.org.nz Email office@grg.org.nz

Member Support Manager: Di Vivian

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If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter please contact 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.

We are a Charitable Trust