



NEWSLETTER - JULY 2015

DATABASE: 5976 WHANAU CARERS

TENA KOUTOU, TALOFA LAVA, KIA ORANA, FAKAALOFA LAHI ATU, MALO E LELEI, BULA VINAKA, TALOHA NI, KAM NA MAURI, GREETINGS TO ALL!

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ Mitre 10 Community of the Year



FROM THE NATIONAL OFFICE

GRG Board and Staff Changes

In 2014 the GRG Board and management worked together to develop a strategic plan and vision for the organisation that will better meet the needs of grandparents raising grandchildren in New Zealand. We realised that to better empower our members on their journey as caregivers we need to raise the profile of GRG nationally, to ensure better access to information and resources and to become a more effective voice to inform government policy that benefits our members.

To achieve these objectives, the Board has now made the decision to adopt a flatter management structure with more and specialised roles and portfolios of responsibility, reporting to the Board through an Executive Trustee. She will be supported by a management team consisting of a Communications and Business Development Manager, Operations Manager.

The Board is delighted to advise the appointment of Diane Vivian as Executive Trustee, confirming her dual governance and management role. This role is often referred to as Executive Director and the terms are used interchangeably in the not-for profit sector. Diane will continue to be responsible for national member support and responsibility for the newsletter. From 1 June 2015 Diane will resign as Chair of the Board and Jo-Anne Thomas will commence her term as Chair.



The Board is also delighted to advise that from April 2015 Kate Bundle has been appointed as Communications and Business Development Manager. Kate, as many of you know, has been a Trustee on the Board since the Trust's establishment 14 years ago and in her capacity as a family lawyer at the time, provided general advice and support on the law to our first Birkenhead Support Group meetings in 1999 and 2000. She has a background in law, communications and marketing, project management, editorial work and executive team leadership in the commercial sector. Together with her work and commitment to GRG over the years, Kate has a deep understanding of the work that needs to be done on behalf of grandparents raising grandchildren. Over the years Kate has also produced two of our national training conferences and will again lead the development of the programme for our next national training in March 2016. Kate has resigned from the Board to take up this role in which she will be responsible for guiding GRG's strategy for all marketing, communications, website, public relations and media liaison (going forward) as well as

developing and implementing funding strategies and initiatives to support the functions of GRG.

The Board is also planning to recruit for an Operations Manager to perform other aspects of the organisations management functions including oversight and management of service delivery, operations staff, finance, compliance, premises management. To complement and broaden the Board's skill-set the Board will also recruit two new Trustees.

SALT Workshops for Gisborne and Kaitaia "Free for members."

We are delighted to now offer two further SALT (sharing and learning together) workshops specially designed for grandparent/kin/whanau carers with the aim of 'growing stronger grandparents, growing stronger grandchildren'. These are free to GRG members and will be held 9.30am -2pm in:

- Gisborne on Tuesday 11th August 2015

Kaitaia on Tuesday 25th August 2015

Facilitators will be Jill Worrall and Diana East, both having many years' experience as adult learning facilitators and trainers. Their workshops are fun, very interactive and strengths-based, covering:

1. Identifying participants' internal and external strengths;
 2. Examining the impact of caring and changes in relationships and life-styles since taking care (Eco-map work);
 3. Identifying one impact or change that each participant would like to work on (eg. loss of friends);
- Discussing the concept of resilience and how that can be harnessed to improve the lives of grandparents and the children they care for.

Feedback from previous workshop participants clearly shows that positive learning experiences such as SALT really bolsters resilience and helps grandparents to cope better.

Numbers at each workshop will be limited to a maximum of 18 participants so you will need to register your interest quickly! You can do this by phoning Diana East on 0800 472 637 ext 6 or emailing d.east13@yahoo.co.nz.

So come on Gisborne and Kaitaia members: Take advantage of this exciting opportunity and contact Diana NOW!

Extra Ordinary Care Fund:

Do not forget folks this closes on June 26th. Ideally you should have these applications in by the week before, just to be safe.



GRG Face book page.

Yes we do have a face book page which now has over 1500 likes; you are welcome to join us. www.facebook.com/grg.org.nz look forward to seeing you there.

The mop of white hair.

I badly needed to do something about my unruly hair and there was, I had heard, this little back street hair salon that had a good reputation. Owned by a large, middle-aged woman who was really good at cutting but who had a rather bad attitude. She was quite feisty and rude and didn't take shit from anyone, client or otherwise. It was a wonder she was still in business except that she was so damn good with hair.

Well, I kind of liked that description of her (I've always hated poncy hair salons with inane chit chat). So I rolled up there and she took one look at my ragged mop of white hair and nodded abruptly, ordered me to sit, asked me did I think I knew better than her how she should cut and do whatever with my hair and if I did maybe it would be better if I just buggered off now.

I was startled but kind of happy too. No idle chit chat with this woman. "Strut your stuff," I spluttered happily.

Next thing she shoves a magazine into my lap - tells me to keep my gob shut because she doesn't want to hear the story of my life and she already knows what the weather is like and

to just mind my business until she tells me she is done with me. She then picked up some lethal looking



scissors and my white hair went flying every which way. I was pretty sure she was snatching me bald but when I looked up in to the mirror to examine the damage she might have been doing, she glared so fiercely I just had to drop my eyes back down to my unread magazine and keep my goddamn mouth shut. Zipped!

Her stance was amazon/warrior-woman/Valkyrie/big time wrestler and scary as hell, I

just sat there quietly hardly daring to breath out loud. I did not, for one moment want to mess with this hair dresser!

Quickly snatched glances in the mirror showed me this freaky image of myself. Did I complain, I would rather have been hung head first over a snake-pit then to interrupt this woman at her work.

All the other clients in the salon watched wide-eyed and silent while their hair dressers just smiled at me from time to time, either in encouragement or sympathy - not sure which, so I continued to sit still, my eyes downcast and my lips glued together. It wasn't easy. I swear if my tongue had so much as trembled she would have sliced my ear off! Next thing she is painting this thick, black glue/paste/tar over what was left of my hair and 'what the hell?', is what I was thinking and then she walks off out the back for a ciggie for a good ten minutes. I didn't move so much as an eyelash. And I used to think wetas were scary...

After a while I opened my eyes to find her standing right behind my chair again summing up her creation. Chin in hand she walked slowly around me touching a lump of that tar here and there and then it was off to the basin to wash this gunk out. I was beginning to understand this woman took no prisoners as she scrubbed and knuckled my mutilated scalp in scalding hot water (not for the faint-hearted believe me.)

Did I complain? Not on your life. I was far too scared of her by this stage.

Back to the chair that I vacated earlier, my hair was blow dried and then cut here and there and combed and fluffed and I was still far too afraid to look in the mirror but then the whole salon went quiet and everyone else was still. I opened my eyes and stared at the mirror...OMG!

I had the sort of cut that I had never seen before, short and puffy and yet tapered down behind my ears and I had these huge bold black stripes that rippled and blended in the lights like a snow leopard in shadows.

Everyone in the salon clapped. I rather think they were just as stunned as I was.

I have never been beautiful - and now I was...

"I'm done," she said, "pay on the way out."

For my birthday tomorrow, hubby is paying for me to go get it done again and I can't wait!

Pauline Sloan.

Whoops.

My granddaughter, nine years old, used my iPad twice in one morning without asking - she has always asked before, as she knows that is what is expected, when you want to use someone else's property.

I looked directly at her, and told her she would not be allowed to use it for the rest of the day, as an appropriate direct consequence. She looked gutted. But rules are rules, and values are values, so I kept my thoughts on being consistent and the responsibility of guiding and nurturing the positive aspects of life.

We both carried on with our day, and we had a pleasant afternoon. I was feeling a little disappointed by bedtime, as I had raised my four children and my granddaughter, to understand that it was their responsibility to do something to make the person they had upset or disappointed, to feel cheered up, happy and or appreciated.

The next morning I was woken up by Little Miss at dawn, telling me to get up. Right now! I stumbled into the kitchen and was directed to sit down. Latisha served me waffles, bacon and maple syrup with my customary breakfast cup of tea. I was then asked to sit down in the lounge. The coffee table was covered in nail polishes, containers with liquid in them, and on the floor a low wide bucket full of warm water which she put my feet in. Latisha then gently washed my feet, then gave me a wonderful foot scrub, and then a massage. I then had my nails polished, and then to finish, a face pack.

I had not felt so cared for and pampered for decades, in fact ever!

And the reason she had wanted the iPad - to get the 'recipes' secretly, for the foot scrub and face mask from the internet, to give me a surprise thank you for being her nan! I have been so blessed to have this sweet, caring, giving and thoughtful darling in my life.

Nan P

Bliss

I love it when the day comes together of its own accord, giving us hours I never thought we could afford, and how, at the end of the day somehow we spent 7 hours on ourselves and we feel even richer.

Shanna

The Muscovy duck

Just after Christmas we had the pleasure of a fluffy white duck, who came for food every time we called the chickens.

Not sure whether this was male or female but it nestled under the feijoa tress every day. Then granddaughter decided to make it a bath so we got out the unused shell pool and filled it with water. This duck used to sit on the edge so granddaughter busily painted a ramp, it even had a pedestrian crossing on it and low and behold we would see it swimming.

Three months later we found a strange egg in the nesting box so now we



knew it was a girl so named her Snow White of course. Two weeks ago she would not move off the nest so we gathered she was clucky so granddaughter thought it a good idea to put some chicken eggs under her.

So we wait the 18 to 21 days for hatching. Now the granddaughter is most concerned that if she hatches the chicks will she be able to teach them like a Hen does and oh no, she will try and teach them to swim, so now we will have to turn the pool upside down. It will be interesting to see how Snow White behaves.

Debbie

Coordinator Announcements.

It is with sadness we let you know that both our Co's from Dargaville and Thames have had to resign due to family commitments, so if anyone is interested in taking on either of these roles please contact us. Katy Edmonds and Sonja Senior, thank you both for all you have done.

We also sadly let you know that Ruth Ballantyne has resigned from Ashburton due to a relocation way down South, thanks for all you have done Ruth. We have a new co in the pipeline and will let you know in due course.

*Thank
you*



Congratulations

It is with great delight we also let you know that Bonnie Williams our North Shore (Auckland Co) was recently announced in the 'Queen's birthdays honor list' and awarded a Queens Service Medal for services to Community, as most will know Bonnie has a passion for special needs children. Congratulations from us all.

School Costs

Variety – is all about “Helping Kiwi Kids Reach Their Potential”

“Variety is there for children in all sorts of challenging circumstances. We fund a broad range of requirements, from much-needed medical equipment, to life-changing mobility needs, to innovative educational initiatives. We have the ability to respond quickly, reaching children in need across the country. Variety fills the funding gaps. We meet a wide range of grass-roots needs through our Kiwi Kid Sponsorship, Future Kiwi Kids, Caring for Kids and Kids on the Move programmes.

Would you like to apply for a grant from Variety? Download a general grant application form [here](#).

We have listed the items below that we do consider for payment:

- ◆ Stationery
- ◆ Uniform
- ◆ Music
- ◆ Sport
- ◆ School trips/activities
- ◆ Part/Full payment towards camp
- ◆ Subject fees e.g. Maths, NCEA payments, Workbooks

We DO NOT pay

- ◆ School donations
- ◆ Attendance dues

If you have any questions regarding this please contact us on 09 520 4111 or email kiwikids@variety.org.nz



Warm regards

Pania Taka-Brown | Community Liaison – Kiwi Kid Sponsorship

Variety – The Children's Charity

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THOUSANDS OF CHILDREN TO RECEIVE CLOTHING ALLOWANCE AFTER NEW ZEALAND FIRST BILL PASSES



Thousands of children will receive a clothing allowance after a New Zealand First Bill passed in Parliament last night. “We expect about 12,000 orphaned or unsupported children who are being looked after by family will be eligible,” says Deputy Leader Tracey Martin.

Mrs Martin’s member’s bill, the Social Security (Clothing Allowances for Orphans and Unsupported Children) Amendment Bill, grew from concern that many children were missing out, yet foster children received the allowance. The Bill means the children will receive a clothing allowance of between \$1000 and \$1685, depending on their age. “It will make a huge difference to those looking after them, who are often grandparents, and on low incomes. About 40 per cent of the carers are on incomes of less than \$33,000 a year. Many are women.”

The Bill passed with unanimous support, but there will be a three-year wait till July 2018 when the allowance is available.

“But still the children wait” Says GRG Trust

Last week Parliament passed the Social Security Act (Clothing Allowances for Orphans and Unsupported Children) Amendment Bill, a private members bill sponsored by New Zealand First’s MP and Deputy Leader Tracey Martin.

The Bill means that unsupported children and orphans will receive a clothing allowance of between \$1000 and \$1685 per year per child but it won’t come into effect until 2018. Foster carers already receive this level of financial support for clothing plus extra allowances to cover health and education costs, including doctor’s visits, prescription costs, dental work, school costs like compulsory fees, camps and stationery and other necessary costs. “This is an important milestone in the fight for the recognition of grandparent and whanau caregivers who are doing the same job as foster carers,” says Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust Founder and Executive Trustee Diane Vivian.

“We are thrilled that Parliament has supported it and we really appreciate Tracey Martin’s work sponsoring this change to the law. But still the children wait! 2018 for heavens sake! For some this change to the law will come too late. ” says Mrs Vivian.

“This has been such a long and hard fought struggle for thousands of caregivers of vulnerable children. So many of our grandparent caregivers are barely making ends meet while raising teenagers and for them 2018 will be three years too late. “Have you ever tried to feed a 15 year old growing boy? Some of our grands are putting their grandchildren’s needs before their own at the risk of their own health and wellbeing. Many of these kids need extra support from professionals because of the trauma they suffered before coming into care. All of it costs money and for too many there is no money to cover it so they go without. If Parliament thinks this clothing allowance for these children is worthy, which it clearly does, why the wait?” asks Mrs Vivian.

“Don’t get me wrong. We are really thrilled and appreciate that the Government has made a number of important changes to the financial support for vulnerable children in grandparent and whanau care, but these caregivers are doing the same job as foster carers at a later stage in life with far less financial support than they actually need which causes considerable stress and hardship,” she explains. In 2009 the Unsupported

Child and Orphans Benefit rates were increased to the same base rates as foster caregivers' board payments and in 2014 the former Minister for Social Development, Paula Bennett introduced the Establishment Grant, School Year Start-Up payments and discretionary Extraordinary Care Fund. These financial support packages have been budgeted for four years until 2018.

"We sincerely hope that this 2018 implementation date for the Clothing Allowances doesn't spell the end of the initiatives Paula Bennett introduced. They have made a significant and positive difference for so many caregivers – especially at the start of the caregiving journey and at the start of each school year.

"Ultimately we urge the Government to consider reviewing the benefits and introducing a specific universal Carer's Benefit for those caregivers raising the vulnerable fostered, unsupported and orphaned children in our society," says Mrs Vivian.

Little Miss 7.

Arriving home from an access visit with her mother, Miss 7 asked if I had been out to see her big sister. I told her I had and asked her how did she know that. She told me that she had seen me going over the bridge. I stupidly asked 'How did she know it was me in my car?' Her reply? 'I recognised your bar code'. My bar code? Then the penny dropped. 'Oh you mean number plate.'

'Yes,' she said 'the number on the car'.

After a chuckle or two, I congratulated her on her thought process after all isn't a bar code a series of numbers that identify an item?

This one will stay in the memory bank and bring a smile to my face for some time to come and when I need it most.

Nan Jo

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

Landline users only. Auckland/free callers (09) 480

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Suite 4 Rawene Chambers. 17 Rawene Rd Birkenhead Auckland 0626 (Ground floor)

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 of.

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

Disclaimer: Any article, services offered or views may not have an endorsement from Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ, discretion is advised. This newsletter is also has copyright

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter or update your details please contact Kelly at the Trust Office on 09 418 3753 or email kelly@grg.org.nz 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



Anti-bullying



0800 456 450



Give a Little for GRG
<http://www.givealittle.co.nz/org/grg>



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