



Newsletter November 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: 5477 Whanau Carers.



From the National Office:

Like us www.facebook.com/grg.org.nz

Your voices:

Helen's Story:

It has almost been three years since that dreadful phone call from my youngest daughter then 14. She had been babysitting for my eldest daughter whilst she went to her partners Christmas party. The phone call was just after midnight "Mum I am sat in a police car, they had a fight and she is hurt" The phone then went dead. I phoned back and a police lady answered, "We are investigating and will get back to you as soon as we can". I frantically waited two hours with no response from any of my phone calls so in the end I drove around to my daughter's house to a scene out of CSI. There was a police cordon tape around the house and two police on guard. I dropped to my knees as I was told they had found two bodies (my daughter and her partner).

My youngest daughter and my three grandchildren had been taken to the police station. Luckily I had taken a friend with me and he drove me to the police station to see them.

The week ahead as many of you will know was filled with police at my home wanting statements and information of my family's lives. On the day before Christmas Eve I told them not to come tomorrow as I would be out buying Christmas presents for my grandchildren. I refused to allow Christmas to be ruined for the children.

From that day my biggest concern was the welfare of my grandchildren, no real time to grieve as my grandchildren's needs were more important than mine. I took them in that night and they have been with me ever since. But how do you tell my then 2, 7 and 9 year old grandchildren, in a way that they would understand that their mummy was dead and even worse my 2 year old grandson that his dad was also dead and it was his daddy that had done it! My answer was that I would always tell them the truth and answer their questions the best I could. Sometimes I may not know the answers but I would always try to find them. I promised from that day I would always keep them safe and nothing bad would happen to them in my house. In many ways we have been very lucky, the support we had in those weeks ahead and still to this day from victim support, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust, family and friends has been tremendous. I just would not have got through without the kindness of so many people. It really has helped me trust and realise that there is good in the world.

As you will understand my grandchildren have been very traumatised from the ordeal, the eldest two the most. I am hoping with the youngest, even though he has lost both parents, that we have been able to deal with his anxiety in such a way that it will not have had a huge effect, but really only time will tell. One of the children really struggles with trust and friendships. She still has nightmares and wets the bed which you could say is not too bad, but as she wants to go to friends for sleepovers and school camp this is embarrassing and children can be very cruel. She is at an age and time in her life when a girl really needs her mum. For my grandson he really just struggles with life. He is constantly angry and hits out at his siblings, suffers from post-traumatic stress, soils himself and when life doesn't seem fair threatens to kill himself or in the past has tried to open the car door to try and throw him-self out. As you can imagine this is not just dangerous for him but to all of us as I am trying to drive and deal with his tantrum at the same time. Fortunately I now have a seven seater car and sit him in the very back away from the doors but this kind of behaviour and threats affects all of our daily lives.

Whirinaki (child youth and mental health) has been a great support, although at first they tried to turn us away telling us it was behaviour nothing to do with them. With support letters from school and our doctor they agreed to see him. During a family counselling session they saw needs in my granddaughter and are now doing assessments on all of the children to see how further they can help. My advice when dealing with these agencies are that they are generally overworked so you really have to stand up for your rights and don't take no for an answer.

Since my initial meeting with Whirinaki we have been introduced to Strengthening Families who co-ordinate all the agencies. So agencies that are involved with the family come to one meeting so they can all be on the same page and there will be no adverse effects on the children by doing too much or undoing each other's work. With my granddaughter starting Intermediate at the beginning of the year this provided an opportunity for her teacher to come along and have a better understanding of her and what she has gone through and what she has to deal with at home. This was awesome

and has made a tremendous difference of how her teachers treat her. They understand why she is so emotional so now she is able to feel supported and settle down to her work. This is something that really was not happening before.

‘Empowering Grandparents Raising Grandchildren’

Proudly supported by



Our Conference March 5th & 6th March 2014: Advanced notice.

It is with HUGE excitement we give you pre-warning of this upcoming event. And WOW do we have a deal for our GRG members, one you will not want to miss!

Special package for out of town member's contains:

- **2 nights' accommodation in Auckland. March 4th & 5th** - Novatel/Ibis/local motels in Ellerslie. Out of Auckland members get first option for this - if not filled then we will open it to Auckland members. (Limited numbers, 70 places) and we will share these fairly and evenly nationwide at our discretion. January will see registrations begin.
- Breakfast on March 5th and 6th for those in accommodation, all lunches, morning and afternoon teas (2 days), plus gala dinner on 5th March. Conference starts 8.30am on March 5th and concludes at 3pm on March 6th
- The most fantastic line up of presenters (see below)
- Total cost for our GRG members is the **\$20** registration fee ONLY. **NO, that is not a typo!** You will be able to do registrations on line or snail mail, in due course. January applications will open.
- Any 'other' (IE not included in the 70) members wanting to attend but not needing accommodation and not wanting to attend the dinner will still pay only **\$20!** too. **More details to come**
- **All you will have to do** is get to the event and for those flying in from around country may we suggest you look out for cheap grab a seat flights and book quickly.

Field Officers, Board members and Co-ordinators will get further information for them-selves attending, about this direct from the GRG Trust.



Save the date!

Wednesday 5th & Thursday 6th
March 2014

The Novotel Hotel, Ellerslie
Auckland, NZ

Empowering Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

3rd National
Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust
New Zealand Members Conference and Support Group Training

We are delighted to announce our line-up of leading experts and key issues for this
MUST ATTEND event for all grandparents raising their grandchildren

Don't miss ...

- ▶ **Nigel Latta**, leading NZ psychologist and expert... **tips and solutions for helping raise teens who have suffered abuse and neglect** and how to deal with the tough stuff
- ▶ **Social Development Minister Paula Bennett** ... **how the Government will deliver its additional \$35M support** ...what will it mean for you raising your grandchildren?
- ▶ **Paul Nixon, Child Youth and Family**... on the **latest research and value** of grandparent and kinship care
- ▶ The **new Principal Family Court Judge Laurence Ryan** ...the **new Family Court reforms** and **how it will affect you** in matters involving disputes over care, contact and guardianship
- ▶ **Brainwave Trust's Dr Simon Rowley** on the **latest research on early childhood brain development** and **Nathan Mikaere-Wallis on the teenage brain**... what you need to know as a caregiver
- ▶ **Pat Buckley, Amped4Life**... what is really happening within **NZ's youth drug culture**, what to look out for with your teenage grandchildren and **how you can guide your grandchildren to make informed and the right choices for life**
- ▶ **Tricia Corin our Field Officer and Benefits Advocate**... what we have learned advocating for GRGs about UCB and other **benefit entitlements, reviews and appeals** and **Sandy Biggs of W&I** on the **recent benefit reforms and changes**
- ▶ PLUS Special **guests the world's oldest hip hop dance group the world famous HIP OP-ERATION** dance crew to perform **and many more inspiring speakers and topics designed to empower you as a grandparent raising grandchildren**



Proudly supported
by



Grand-daughter writes: Your arms were always open when I needed a hug.

Your heart understood when I needed a friend

you're gentle eyes told me when I needed to learn.

Your strength and love guided my wings to fly.

Thank You for everything that has ever happened in

my life and forgive me for my wrongs, you deserve the

best and that is what you've had, another year and you

still haven't aged hehehe... May Our Father in Heaven continue to bless you with many, many years of happiness and truth.



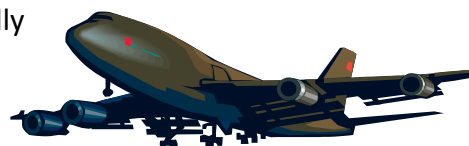
Does Nature imitate life?



I was out tending the passion-fruit vine which has had a huge growth spurt. I had popped up some new netting for it to climb over. The new growth was sending out many tendrils and as I attempted to guide them in the right direction it crossed my mind that they appeared like family life, some just waved around in the breeze going nowhere. Others wound them-selves tightly around the main shoot strangling it. Some others knew to clasp on to the netting and move forward, yet some held tightly to another tendril looking for support. Sometimes I guess no matter how much guiding one does, some make their own decisions.

Before you go STOP:

A member emails: Just back from a week in Bali paid for by my family to arrive to an email and a letter saying my benefit had been stopped from the day after I left as I had not informed Work & Income that I was going, which is a lie as I phoned them the week before I left and gave them all the details and they 'kindly gave me permission' to go and explained that if I had not notified them then my benefit could be stopped. It seems the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing. Not happy but will contact the W & I office tomorrow. They only gave one 10 days to get back in touch with them and as I was not having access to internet while I was away was unaware of the email or letter..... Not happy, had to let my landlord know as my rent may not have gone out....just giving you the heads up and a warning to all even when one does it correctly it is not correct....



If you currently receive any benefits or payments from a Government Agency you must notify them before traveling. This could include NZ Super or Veteran's Pension, benefits from Work & Income, compensation from ACC, Student Allowance or loans.

May we also suggest when calling them that you get a name of whom you spoke to and take note of date and time. Keep this in a safe place. Or pop in and see them and get a form signed off or email and ask for a reply and save to a file.

This is work and income policy, **remember it is not the LAW, this is what NZ'ers forget. We advise to still notify them.**

Absence from New Zealand

Obligation to advise of departure from New Zealand

All clients receiving a **main benefit** must advise Work and Income before they leave New Zealand. If the client or partner does not advise Work and Income prior to their international travel, their benefit payments will stop from the day after they leave New Zealand.

Information Matching Agreement with New Zealand Customs Service

The Ministry of Social Development has an Information Matching agreement with New Zealand Customs Service that allows Work and Income to detect clients that have left New Zealand while receiving a benefit.

Once identified, the client's eligibility to continue to receive benefit payments while they are absent from New Zealand is automatically determined by Ministry systems.

Length of travel for an approved travel reason

Clients can travel for up to **28 days** for an **approved travel reason**. The client should explain the length of their intended absence.

Consider:

- the length of time the event or reason for travel will take
- the duties the client will have as part of their reason (eg if they are travelling for a funeral, do they have responsibilities beyond attending the funeral itself such as estate duties or sorting out the possessions of the deceased?)
- flight availability and travel time

Remember to advise clients that generally they are only able to continue to be paid their benefit for up to 28 days in a 52 week period. This should be taken into account when deciding the approved travel period.

A client who leaves New Zealand without advising Work and Income of their travel can only have their benefit backdated to the day after departure date if they contact Work and Income as soon as they could reasonably have been expected to, given the circumstances.

This may be while the client is still absent from New Zealand, or once they have returned.

Receiving only Orphans/Unsupported Child's Benefit

The child (that Orphans Benefit or Unsupported Child's Benefit is paid for) can be absent from New Zealand and continue to receive payment for the first **28 days** of an absence if it does not affect the caregiver or child's qualification for Orphans Benefit or Unsupported Child's Benefit.

When the child remains in New Zealand and the caregiver is absent from New Zealand, Orphans Benefit and Unsupported Child's Benefit payments can continue to be paid. The child must continue to meet the definition of [dependent child](#) and the caregiver must continue to be the [principal caregiver](#).

Exceptions

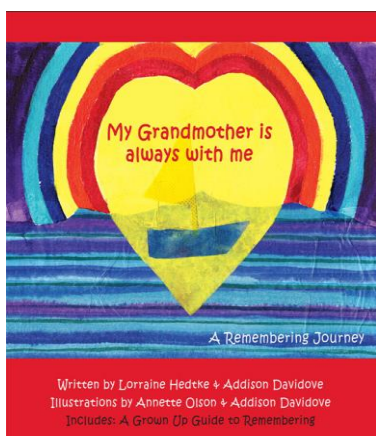
- When the caregiver qualifies for Orphans Benefit or Unsupported Child's Benefit but they have not been resident and present in New Zealand for a continuous period of 12 months at any time, payment must stop for any period the child is absent from New Zealand.
- When the caregiver and child are going to a country which New Zealand has a reciprocal agreement with Orphans Benefit may continue in certain circumstances. For more information about these reciprocal agreements, contact Senior Services - international

I just do not like the wording "we give you permission" we are NOT in school! Thank you for letting us know would be far better, now this is what you need to do etc.

My Grandmother is Always With Me

by Lorraine Hedtke and Addison Davidove.

'My Grandmother is Always With Me' offers children a way to make sense out of



death when a loved one dies. The story is told through the eyes of a young girl and her grandmother. Each colourfully illustrated page suggests another way in which the little girl benefits from keeping a storied legacy close to heart after her grandmother dies.

This book offers a different approach to death and grief than many of the other messages that children receive. When a loved one dies, their love for them does not die. Children, still love that person as they did before but they now need to use memories more deliberately to keep the love alive. *My Grandmother is Always With*

Me suggests a way for children to make sense out of the changes in their lives and to incorporate the many memories of the person who has died into their own lives.

Children easily understand the idea and importance of remembering. When asked about what was important to them about their deceased father or mother or grandparent, they are ever ready with information. It does not take much prodding

for a child to bring to life the voice of a deceased loved one. Just as when a child speaks through the voice of a stuffed animal, he or she can easily materialize the stories they shared with those who have died. Remembering practices are a resource and place of comfort. *My Grandmother is Always With Me* is a wonderful remembering journey that shows how the art of remembering brings the best of the past into the promise of a successful and happy future.. Copyright © 2012 Lorraine Hedtke MSW, ACSW, PhD. Can be ordered from Amazon on line



Our Di was nominated and made the finals for this prestigious Award; she nearly fainted when she saw the other nominee's. Her family and a few GRG Board attended the event at Sky City. We congratulate Emeline Afeaki-Mafile'O from Affirming Works for being the winner of this category. Well done young lady.

We are being heard globally.

Chris Leaves from *Family Rights Group* got an MBE in United Kingdom:

Jean Stogden founder of *Grandparents Plus* was awarded the OBE in UK:

Betty Cornelius from *Cangrands* in Canada was nominated and won the Grant Mac Ewan University Distinguished Alumni Award:

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ won New Zealander of the year for Community sponsored by Kiwi Bank & Mitre 10:

Free Caregiver trainings:

Child Development

12-Nov-13	North Shore	Dallas Pickering	9am-3:30pm
13-Nov-13	Manurewa	Sandy McPhee	9am-3:30pm
19-Nov-13	Blenheim	Catriona Ward	9am-3:30pm
Attachment and Resilience			
9-Nov-13	Waitakere	Sandy McPhee	9am-3:30pm
26-Nov-13	Christchurch	Laura Hall	9am-3:30pm
26-Nov-13	Cromwell	Barbara McElligott	9am-3:30pm
27-Nov-13	Petone	Susan Wall	9am-3:30pm
Understanding and Managing Behaviour			
12-Nov-13	Ashburton	Laura Hall	9am-3:30pm
27-Nov-13	New Plymouth	Mary August	9am-3:30pm
Health and Wellbeing			
19-Nov-13	Kaikohe	Gaylene Lawrence	9am-3:30pm
Safety and Prevention			
26-Nov-13	Tokoroa	Lynne Matthews	9am-3:30pm
Identity and Belonging			
19-Nov-13	Palmerston North	Mary August	9am-3:30pm
20-Nov-13	Timaru	Laura Hall	9am-3:30pm
Legal Issues			

11-Nov-13	Porirua	Susan Wall	9am-3:30pm
20-Nov-13	Levin	Mary August	9am-3:30pm
21-Nov-13	Rotorua	Lynne Matthews	9am-3:30pm
28-Nov-13	Wanganui	Mary August	9am-3:30pm
Team Work			
21-Nov-13	Masterton	Mary August	9am-3:30pm
Working with Adolescents			
13-Nov-13	Hamilton	Lynne Matthews	9am-3:30pm
14-Nov-13	Christchurch	Gaylene Lawrence	9am-3:30pm
20-Nov-13	Whangarei	Gaylene Lawrence	9am-3:30pm
20-Nov-13	Dunedin	Barbara McElligott	9am-3:30pm
21-Nov-13	Manukau	Dallas Pickering	9am-3:30pm
27-Nov-13	Nelson	Catriona Ward	9am-3:30pm
Advanced - self harm / suicidal behaviours			
1-Nov-13	Rotorua	CASA	9am-1pm
11-Nov-13	Invercargill	CASA	9am-1pm
22-Nov-13	Grey Lynn	CASA	9am-1pm
I care 2			
16-Nov-13	Grey Lynn	Dallas Pickering	9am-3pm
12 November	Napier	CYF Trainer	9am-3pm
14 November	Tauranga	CYF Trainer	9am-3pm

Contact. Christine Williams Training Assistant: Fostering Kids Register online:

<http://schedule.fosteringkids.net/schedule.php>

PO Box 30 188, Lower Hutt, 5040 | Ph 04 566 0294 | Free 0800 693 323

Our diversity: Who are we?

Some of us are single grand's raising grandchildren, others married/partnered, some are great-grandparents, and others are not only raising grandchildren but also caring for a very unwell mother or father of the children. Then we also have those who are still raising their own children and grandchildren too. Others also care for their own parent/s in their homes plus the grandchildren and some are also caring for their parent who has Alzheimers and some their unwell partner. We have Aunts, Uncles, cousins and siblings caring as well. Then we have the carers, who took on the parent as a Foster child and now raise her/his children (grandchildren) we call these 'heart families' What an AMAZING lot you are. Thank you, for all you do.





KidzaCool Adventures:

www.standforchildren.org.nz

Why KidzaCool Adventures?

Quality support and respite for foster/kin/whanau carers.

Our KidzaCool Adventures programme gives children the opportunity to play and relax in a fun, safe and sociable environment while foster/kin/whanau carers work, relax or catch up with friends and family. We like to think we offer foster/kin/whanau carers peace of mind while offering children, aged 5-12, a piece of the action!! The programme is a free service for caregivers. Register NOW!

Northern Office , Phone 09 437 9050	13 - 17 January;
Auckland Office , Phone 09 534 4017	20 - 24 January;
Midland Office , Phone 07 345 9097	20 - 24 January;
East Coast Office , Phone 06 867 5614	13 - 17 January;
Central Office , Phone 06 364 8069	13 - 17 January;
Christchurch Office , Phone 03 332 2541	13 - 17 January;
Southern Office , Phone 03 446 8119	13 - 17 January;



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

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 Ext 1 (Caregivers only please) Auck. callers 480 6530

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 8am – 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.

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