



## Newsletter September 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: 5426 Whanau Carers.

**From the National Office:**

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**Your voices:**

**Grandfathers Day:**

**A Tribute to Grandfathers:**

As a Granddad bringing up two little boys alone, one now aged 8 and one 9. I have had them both since they were babes it's great after reading some of the stories to know that I am doing OK. There are times when I lose my cool and patience and feel terrible for the rest of the day but I suppose we all have times where things get on top a little. Some of the experiences are quite leveling and put some of the things I do into perspective. I would not change my life for anything as the boys put the youth back in this aging body. The one thing as grandparents we can ensure our little ones get is somewhere to place their feet firmly on the ground and to know that regardless of any trips they may have in life whilst we are around they don't have to come far for love and dependable support. Again I really appreciate the newsletters they are my learning tool and of great value to me.

*Regards Granddad D*



**Yah gotta love 'em :** Grandson asleep on couch unwell: snoring. Poppy: asleep, watching TV or not, snoring and even the cat asleep snoring. Oh My !!

### **Time with Granddad:**

We have care of our granddaughter who has just turned five and started school, in the holidays leading up to term two our granddaughter spent all day with her grandfather and they had some interesting conversations. The best one was her asking about her place in the world and as Granddad was explaining 'blended' families she said "so it's just like a smoothie and Granddad and Nana are the yoghurt, the grand children are the berries and their parents are either banana's or kiwi fruit". I hope others find this worth a smile!



*Jo*

### **Growing Good Boys**

My 7 year old grandson is growing up in a household without a man. His own father has been in and out of prison and is not so much interested in his son. So life can be tricky for these boys when there is no good male role model. So I had a talk with my nephew who is a teacher and we discussed the importance of:

1. Making sure my grandson spends time with good male role models such as Uncles.
2. On father's day, my grandson does not have access to his own dad so his Uncle gets his father's day card. I spoke to the teacher beforehand so she knew that he had a stand-in dad.
3. A project my nephew suggested was to gather together pictures of men that the grandson admires and talk about what are the good values of these men e.g All Blacks, TV characters etc. Putting these pictures into a scrapbook is a good fun activity for both of us.
4. My nephew also discussed the importance of hanging pictures in the grandson's room that affirm the wonderful things about being a good male.

That was such an important discussion for us to have and ever since I have been slipping things into the conversation, that show my grandson how wonderful it is to be male and to be clearer about the good values of being male. Of course I am also trying to cut out negative talk about men as well.

The other thing is that my grandson is Maori and the media seems full of negative images of being a Maori male so I am hanging pictures of really good Maori male role models and yesterday he went and helped one of his Uncles to serve breakfast at a fundraiser so I photographed him and his Uncle and put it on Facebook so he sees that good Maori males help other people!!

So far he seems to be growing up to be a wonderful boy.

*Nanny C*

**Just for Granddad:** Complete Steak Dinner in CrockPot

Use a thick 3/4 inch steak

Pour a 1/2 cup Heinz 57 sauce over meat cover with a layer of foil add foil wrapped potatoes

and foil wrapped frozen corn cobs or any veg cook on low for 6 hours

Full steak dinner any night of the week! This can also be done with thick pork chops or chicken breasts and BBQ sauce. The whole meal cooks in the slow cooker.



***I look at you** and see me,  
A reflection of what I am to be,  
Strong, kind and caring,  
wise words, forever sharing.  
I am thankful that you are there for me,  
For without you what would I be?  
A role model for me to become,  
No your work is not done,  
From your loving grandson.*

Thank you Grand dad ☺

**Grandson now 19:**

Growing old is not for sissy's that's for sure. Poppies eye sight is now failing, Macular degeneration and there is no cure, he can no longer do the gardens and grounds, and to see him trying to read is just so sad and heartbreaking (yes he has all the tools to make this easier). Grandson has taken over helping in the garden and jumps to his defense if nanny has a little growl about things. This great hulking boy (young man) sits on the arm of poppies chair with his arm around his shoulders; he affectionately pats him on his upper arm. The banter between them has to be heard to be believed, they joke and laugh about what seems to me to be the strangest things, but the joy is undeniable as is the love. Some days I wonder which one of them took the silly pills that morning.

Happy grandfather's day my dear husband, you have done well, very well.



**Brian Faulkner** was 72 when this picture was taken, ice skating with his two grand-daughters, 'never too old to have fun' says Brian. *We agree and we are sure his grand-daughters are pretty impressed as well.*

## ***Happy GRAND father's Day to all!***

*You may feel like you have half the energy but you have twice the wisdom twice the experience and all the love.*



**Congratulations:** Margaret Pearson's Upper Hutt GRG Support group has reached the finalist stage for the Wellington Airport, in partnership with Wellington Community Trust, and the five local councils have joined together to recognise the work carried out by community groups in the wider Wellington region. The focus of the Awards is to reward the valuable contribution made by volunteers. Well done Margaret :)

### **Having a vent!**

16 years ago, they both, came into our care, traumatised, frightened and had no routine, I was working full time then, but quickly realised I had to give up my job to look after these 2 innocent little ones aged 4 & 6. As time went on with 9 repeated frivolous court cases and many, many thousand \$\$'s saw any savings we had disappear. Fortunately, my husband was still working. We managed just. Life slipped by, as I look back now it seems quickly, but at the time the drama's caused by the 'mother' who impacted further upon the grandchildren wreaked havoc. We lurched from one thing to another in this new life we did not ask for, and nor did the children. The psychological damage very soon became apparent in these children: which thrust us into a life of dealing with their mental unwellness and all the Agencies associated with this, weekly counselling for one child for 8 years. Then teenage years came and so did self-mutilation and drugs and alcohol, if we thought the early years were hard we had seen nothing yet!

Husband became really unwell, stress related I am sure and took early retirement. As he owned the business there was very little left to go on, but manage we did for a number of years. So here we are two 64 year olds, worn out, shattered, still dealing with on-going issues with the young ones now 20 & 22 and still trying to hold them together. Recently due to circumstances we applied for an unemployment benefit, now called Job Seeker). Needs be as needs must and a great deal of swallowing pride here I might add, how did we get to this! Unsupported Child benefit stopped when the grand's turned 18. One youngster gets Sickness Benefit and the other the Student Allowance (more about this later).

**OUTRAGEOUSLY:** We have been told we have to attend job training and if we do not our Unemployment (now Job Seeker) will be stopped. So we have to drag our old wrecked, weak, ill bodies down to training for 6 months daily. For goodness sakes who in their right mind would employ us! We have sacrificed everything for these children who otherwise would have been in State Care and ended up goodness knows where. What has NZ come to? Forcing 60+ into the work force! (*update on this below*)

**STUDENT ALLOWANCE:** We finally got the oldest one then 20 into a good enough head space to attend Uni. She duly applied for a Student Loan and a Student Allowance. S/L no problem, then came Student Allowance, because we were getting the Unsupported Child Benefit for her we were deemed as her parents! Excuse me, we are her grandparents! They demanded all our financial details! Sorry no we have suffered enough degrading through this whole scenario for 16 years, no more! So sadly for her she has to have her Student Allowance add to her Student loan. This is just so wrong!

**WHY:** Is it when one is getting UCB it states this child must not be your biological child to get UCB.....YET when it comes to Student Allowance they are considered our child. Wrong, wrong, wrong!!!!!! If I can see this anomaly with my fast growing feeble brain and weakened eye sight why cannot the policy makers. Yes I am bloody mad not just for myself but for the many other thousands of you that are yet to come up against this.....

### **From Study Link site:**

#### **Parents - general definition**

**This provides a general definition of parents.**

This is a natural, adoptive or whangai parent, caregiver, step-parent, partner of your parent, or any other person acting as a parent who is responsible for your well-being and financial support.

The Student Allowances Regulations 1998 defines a step-parent as a person who is not the student's father or mother, or a person acting in place of a parent of the student; but is a person who is married to, or in a civil union or in a de facto relationship with, the mother or father of the student or a person acting in place of the parent of the student.

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



## **New Welfare Reforms Catch Grandparents Raising Grandchildren. Media Release:**

The new welfare Job Seeker reforms have had a detrimental effect on grandparents who are raising their traumatised grandchildren due to family breakdown. Diane Vivian Chair of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ says their phones have been ringing non-stop from upset grandparents who have received letters stating they now need to go into W & I for an appointment to seek work. Most of these people are aged 55 to 64. They are tired and worn out from their role of raising their precious grandchildren whom many have special needs and psychological damage and many have abandonment issues and grandma is needed to be there for them. These people are not the parents of the child and in some cases not even related but had been placed on a DPB. If the child they care for is severely disabled then they can go on a DPB for care of the sick and infirm with no job requirements, but in many cases these particular children are just below the criteria.

Vivian says, it is time a Carers Benefit was looked at to enable them to safely care for these vulnerable children, these wonderful grandparents have sacrificed their later years and in many cases their careers to support these children. They have raised them on a pittance, faced adversity, possibly saved their lives and this Job Seeker reform may indeed be the final nail in the coffin. ENDS.

**Work and Income respond: WINZ encourages grandparents to call with concerns:** Work and Income is encouraging grandparents who are raising their grandchildren to call their offices if they're concerned about welfare reforms.

It follows the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust **claiming** that WINZ had been sending their members letters, asking them to go in for an appointment to seek work.

WINZ Deputy CEO Debbie Power says everyone's circumstances are different. She says in some cases it's not appropriate for grandparents to be expected to work and therefore other options are available for them.

Debbie Power says WINZ has met with the trust in the past to explain the changes.  
Ends

**If you are having difficulties with W & I and these new changes, a person has been put in place to assist you, you CAN ask for an exemption.**

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Ministry of Social Development  
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## **Grandparents Raising Grandchildren and the Welfare Reform**

**Friday, 26 July 2013, 4:00 pm**

**Press Release: [Aotearoa NZ Association of Social Workers](#)**

Press Release

### **ANZASW Media Release on Grandparents Raising Grandchildren and the Welfare Reform**

We would hope and expect that New Zealand could be a society where grandparents needing to raise their grandchildren could be financially supported in doing so, not badgered by the state to stay in employment. This is the view of the President of Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers (ANZASW), Jane Maidment .

Yet the current 'welfare reform' or the Social Security (Benefit Categories and Work Focus) Amendment Act is doing just that. Asking grandparents nearing retiring age, who have dedicated their time and support to increase the well- being of their grandchildren, to attend employment workshops and actively seek employment to cover costs as their benefit decreases.

Without grandparents raising grandchildren these vulnerable children will be without family members to take care of them and as a consequence they will be put into care. This leaves the potential for thousands of children to be placed in the care of Child, Youth and Family, putting more pressure on this organisation and the government that funds and supports it. In the long run this will cost the government money that they could currently be using to support and encourage grandparents raising grandchildren.

Considering the personal sacrifices already made to ensure the happiness and well-being of their grandchildren it is unfair and heavy handed to force these grandparents into employment as it is a difficult and all consuming task they have taken on. Majority of the children that grandparents are raising come from situations that have created behavioural and emotional issues that require constant love, attention and supervision. To take this precious time away from these children because their grandparents must go to work would be detrimental to any progress made and could promote existing feelings of neglect and abandonment.

A lot of these grandparents have sacrificed steady employment, and as a consequence, a steady wage to take care of their grandchildren in their time of need. Some have had to sell retirement homes then taken on a mortgage to purchase a larger home in order to meet the needs of raising grandchildren. Others have cashed in retirement savings to meet costs and legal fees and are now entirely dependent on benefit income. A selfless deed that should be applauded, not compromised. If we force grandparents who are raising their grandchildren back to work, shifting the focus from care to employment we not only risk the current

progress made but put up a barrier for any grandparents considering taking on their grandchildren in the future. ENDS.

This is the best thing we have read in all the stupidity AND MAY WE STRONGLY SUGGEST YOU COPY THIS AND TAKE IT ALONG TO YOUR Work & Income person if needed

**KidzaCool Adventures:** [www.standforchildren.org.nz](http://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.

### **Our Programme:** Adventure and Fun!

The programmes are held over five days during the school term holidays and offer a balance of sports, Art and craft activities, tailoring each session to suit the age and ability of the children. We take full advantage of our regional sites great facilities, running our programme with safety as a top priority to ensure care-giver peace of mind.

The children are assigned to groups of six or seven with staff members who support them throughout the stay. Staff have been carefully selected and trained to help them bring out the best in children!

**How to Apply:** To apply, you must have had a child in your care for 12 months or more and you must not be the biological or adoptive parents of the child.

Applications generally close four weeks prior to the camp start date. Those whom we cannot place at the time will be held on our waitlist for later programmes during the year. Children who have previously attended a KidzaCool Adventures programme may apply for another stay however, we endeavour to prioritise first time applicants and those who have high needs for a break. Any remaining places may then be offered to return stay applicants.

Applications are to be supported by Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ use us as your referring agency.



## *KidzaCool Adventures Holiday Programme Dates for 2013*

**Auckland Office**, Phone 09 534 4017 – 7-11 Oct

**Midland Office**, Phone 07 345 9097 – 7-11 Oct

**East Coast Office**, Phone 06 867 5614 – 7-11 Oct

**Central Office**, Phone 06 364 8069 7-11 Oct

**Christchurch Office**, Phone 03 332 2541 7-11 Oct

**Southern Office**, Phone 03 446 8119 7-11 Oct

### **Humour:** But is it?

woman in a supermarket is following a grandfather and his badly behaved 3-year-old grandson. It's obvious to her that he has his hands full with the child screaming for sweets in the sweet aisle, biscuits in the biscuit aisle, and for fruit, cereal and pop in the other aisles.



Meanwhile, Granddad is working his way around, saying in a controlled voice, "Easy, William, we won't be long, easy, boy." Another outburst, and she hears the granddad calmly say, "It's okay, William, just a couple more minutes and we'll be out of here. Hang in there, boy."

At the checkout, the little terror is throwing items out of the cart, and Granddad says again in a controlled voice, "William, William, relax buddy, don't get upset. We'll be home in five minutes; stay cool, William."

Very impressed, the woman goes outside where the grandfather is loading his groceries and the boy into the car. She said to the elderly gentleman, "It's none of my business, but you were amazing in there. I don't know how you did it. That whole time, you kept your composure, and no matter how loud and disruptive he got, you just calmly kept saying things would be okay. William is very lucky to have you as his grandpa." "Thanks," said the grandfather, "but I'm William.....his name is Kevin."



### **Hot tip of the month:**

If they're going to draw on the walls, let them! Put blackboard paint on the inside walls of the outside playhouse, on one section of a fence or perhaps on the back of the garage wall. That way it doesn't look messy and no dust inside. You can even get chalk board paint in different colours so as not to be so dreary.

**Tauranga Grandparents:** Ruby would like to set up an informal coffee group for grand's to get together to have a chat, please give Ruby a call on 07 2188850

**Taupo Grandparents:** I would like members to contact me on my email - viv.maree@gmail.com or phone 07 386 8033 about our meetings

1. With a day and time that would suit them best - (I do have premises in Taupo for meetings on a Sunday afternoon)
2. How often would you like to meet - fortnightly, monthly or bi months?
2. Would you like a bi monthly group outing? Thanks. Viv Needham

### Home Remedy for Head Lice

Make sure and Save this so you can have the Recipe:

Rather than turning to harsh chemicals this is a great alternative:

Mix equal parts of Coconut oil + apple cider vinegar to treat head lice.

Coconut oil dissolves the lice's outer skeletal shell instantly. So once you put it on someone's head you can have them shower and rinse it off right away and all the lice will be killed and gone! Plus there are no chemicals!

### How To Make Fairies in a Jar



This is something everyone will love! Just imagine the look on your grandchild's face when they see this.

#### FAIRIES IN A JAR DIRECTIONS:

1. Cut a glow stick and shake the contents into a jar.
2. Add diamond glitter

3. Seal the top

4. Shake hard

This is something they will never forget so it's worth a little work on this one.



[Give A Little](http://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)**