



**GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN TRUST NZ**  
Raising resilient and healthy children and young people through empowering grandparent and whānau care families since 2001

## Are you raising someone else's child full-time?

GRG provides support, information, advice, advocacy services and caregiver education programmes nationwide to full-time caregivers who are raising a child not born to them. Membership is free. Call us on toll free 0800 GRANDS or visit [www.grg.nz](http://www.grg.nz) to join.

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Welcome! Tena koutou, Talofa Lava, Kia Orana, Fakaalofa Lahi Atu, Malo e Lelei, Bula Vinaka, Taloha Ni, Kam Na Mauri Namaste, Hallo, Bonjour, Hola and Greetings this month to our 6,284+ member families and all our non-member subscribers!

## Financial support for raising someone else's child...

If you are raising someone else's child because:

- there has been a breakdown in the child's family, or
- their parents have died, or
- they are missing, or
- they have a long-term disablement

AND you are to be their principal temporary or long-term caregiver, from the date you apply to Work and Income for this support, then you are entitled to either the Unsupported Child Benefit or the Orphan's Benefit to help with the costs of raising the child.

The Unsupported Child or Orphan's Benefits are not taxable and they are 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 New Zealand.

To qualify, you must also be over 18 years of age, resident and present in NZ 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 us tollfree on 0800 GRANDS (0800 472 637) or call our National Support Office on 09 418 3753 for a referral to our advocate, Tricia Corin.



Brad Clark  
Chief Executive

# Hello and welcome

After a period of change and rebuilding for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ (GRG), your national support office team, and the amazing volunteers around the country, led by a hard-working Board of Trustees, are refocusing on key priorities.

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We have our sights firmly set on delivering the best possible support for a growing number of grandparents and their grandchildren across the country, presenting with more complex needs. We will also challenge ourselves to imagine what the future might look like, considering the needs of our grandparents and the tamariki (children) and rangitahi (young people) under their care. To this end, we have asked the National Support Office team and Support Group Coordinators to share their thoughts on what is going well, what might we do better or different, and how we might be more inclusive and responsive to different ethnicities amongst the GRG membership.

Armed with this information your Chief Executive and the GRG Board has planned a Strategy Day later in May, to consider and reset GRG priorities for the foreseeable future. I look forward to sharing the outcomes of these discussions when available.

In the meantime, we know that a key priority is to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of our organisation so that we can continue our good work, grow, and evolve to support more GRG members and their whanau over time.

GRG currently relies on grants from generous trusts and foundations, the support of regular donors via the One Percent Collective, other ad-hoc donations, and contributions via time limited partnerships (such as Zonta for SALT workshops). Our contract with Oranga Tamariki is up for renewal at the end of the financial year, and with significant changes in the social sector, unfortunately, there is uncertainty in this relationship. And we all know that it's tough out there, with more organisations seeking funding from similar sources to support growing needs.

To ensure financial sustainability, we need to diversify and grow our revenue streams. Amongst strategies to employ, we will seek to raise more awareness for GRG as a charitable cause and create more 'asking' opportunities such as regular giving, major donor, and a bequest (gifts in wills) programme. We believe strongly in our cause and the value of our brand and know there will also be companies who could benefit from alignment with GRG and the good work we do nationally.

To lift our fundraising and awareness game, there is a lot of hard work to do, and we will need your help along the way. For starters, we want to tell more of our stories. To engage and inspire people and companies to support our cause, we will reach out to GRG members who may wish to share their story to use in fundraising campaigns or on our new website (launch is imminent!). If you wish to share your story, please don't be shy to reach out to me directly. Similarly, if you wish to support GRG with a regular or one-off gift, or know someone who does, or would like to know more on how to leave a bequest in your will, I would be grateful to hear from you

I have been fortunate to meet quite a few of our incredible members over the past couple of months at Support Group and Coffee meetings, and at an Art Therapy workshop for young people over the school holidays. Thank you for making me feel so welcome. I'm more enthused than ever to get on with the job of working with our team and members to ensure GRG continues its good work and is enabled to thrive to meet a growing need.

A stylized handwritten signature in black ink.

[Brad@grg.org.nz](mailto:Brad@grg.org.nz)







Christina Howe  
Senior Community Advocate

## Parenting Order vs Additional Guardianship Order – What do I need?

We've probably all heard the terms custody, day to day care, contact, and guardian. But what do these terms actually mean and how do they relate to your circumstances?

If you have an agreement to care for your grandchildren or other children in your care, but you have not gone to Family Court this is called an Agreement. This Agreement is not legally binding. This means that if something happens and the parents of the child change their mind, you and the children are not protected. The parents can come and take the children out of your care, and you have no legally binding order from the Family Court to stop them. I know this will sound scary, and it can be quite scary because it leaves you and the children vulnerable to things like mood shifts and new partners changing the family dynamics. Of course, the fantastic side about living with an Agreement is that nobody had to go through the daunting Family Court system.

Some fantastic news for you all though! If you have reached an Agreement, you can make that Agreement legally binding. You can do this by applying for a Joint Application to Make a New Parenting Order by Consent. Most of the time, this joint application will be given to a Judge in their Chambers, and it will be signed off without you needing to appear in court. This will make your Agreement into a Parenting Order, which is legally binding.

I've mentioned the term Parenting Order above so let's talk about that first. A Parenting Order legally states who has the day to day care of the children and who has contact with the children. Day to day care means just that, who has the children in their care and looks after the children each day. This was formerly known as custody. If you have day to day care of the children then you are legally entitled to care for those

children and make all the little daily decisions. Contact of course means who is legally entitled to have contact with the children.

Contact with children can take many different shapes and forms. Contact listed in a Parenting Order would generally cover the who, when, where, how questions. For example, mum might have contact every Saturday from 1pm until 4pm at the park supervised by her Aunty. Contact could also look at any contact between siblings that do not live together, or extended family that have been a part of the children's lives.

As hard as it is, the Family Court will usually always allow some form of contact between the children and their parents. This is because one of the guiding principles in the Care of Children Act is that children should continue to have a relationship with both of their parents. How you navigate that contact with the children's parents can be hard and cause many years of tension.

Now that you've got a Parenting Order, this order will stay legally binding on all people named in the order until the child is 16 years old. At that time, the child is deemed old enough to make a decision about their own day to day care and who they have contact with.

Now let's talk pros and cons of having a Parenting Order in place. Pros include things like the children are secure in your care and there is no risk of them being taken away unexpectedly by their parents, there is consistency and routine around contact arrangements

If you would like to know more about Parenting or Guardianship Orders or have any questions, please contact the GRG National Support Office on 0800 GRANDS

for the children so they know what to expect and the big one is if the children are taken out of your care by someone else, you can be granted a Warrant to Uplift which means Police can retrieve the children for you. Cons of a Parenting Order can include things like needing to fight through Family Court which includes legal fees, parents not committing to the legally binding contact arrangements, or children not wanting to have contact with their parents when they legally should be.

A Parenting Order is not a magical unicorn that will solve all problems when raising someone else's child, but it is something that gives security and continuity of care to children that have likely not had that while living with their parents.

Now to talk about an Additional Guardianship Order and why you need this order as well. It might feel like a Parenting Order is enough, but a Parenting Order does not make you a guardian of the children. Without being a guardian of the children, you cannot make guardianship decisions for them.

### What are guardianship decisions you might wonder?

Guardianship decisions include things like when and where to take children to the doctor / dentist, what school to enrol children in, whether they can attend school camps or go on holiday, relocating children from one place to another, attending church in the weekends, right through to medical treatment.

Becoming an Additional Guardian is just that, you are added as the children's guardian together with their parents. So where able, you still need to make guardianship decisions with the parents, or at least let them know. Being a guardian will last until the child is 18 years old. At this point, they are old enough to make decisions for themselves as legal adults.

When thinking about getting legally binding court orders through the Family Court it pays to have as much information as possible before making a decision that is right for your family. But please do keep in mind that you will need both a Parenting Order and an Additional Guardianship Order to be able to fully care for the children.

Keep posted for the next edition where we talk about Oranga Tamariki court orders. If you have any questions please contact us today on free call 0800 GRANDS.

## Regular Giving Made Easy!

Your support goes right where it is needed.

Have you ever considered how you could give back to those in need? Well, here's how you can:

#### Payroll Giving:

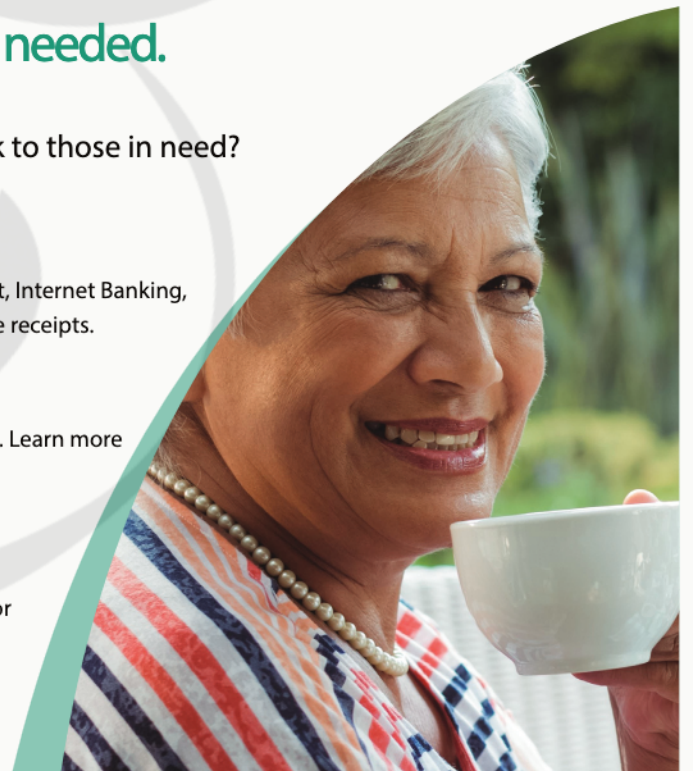
Set up regular donations effortlessly through an Automatic Payment, Internet Banking, or Credit Card. Download the GRG Donation Form for tax-deductible receipts.

#### Payroll Giving:

Donate directly from your payroll if your employer offers this option. Learn more at <http://www.payrollgivinginfo.org.nz/about-payroll-giving>.

#### Business and Corporate Support:

Support GRG through sponsorship or by donating goods/services for daily operations or events. Contact us to discuss ways to help.







Tricia Corin  
Specialist Advocate  
Income/Financial  
Support

# Tricia Advocating for You

## Benefit Rate Increases and Extraordinary Care Fund

You may have noticed changes to benefit rates as of April 1st, 2024. These adjustments, known as the Annual General Adjustment, have resulted in increased benefit rates. Additionally, income and asset limits for certain support have been raised, allowing more individuals to receive assistance from Work and Income (WINZ). In this edition, you'll find the latest rates for the Orphans Benefit (OB) and Unsupported Child's Benefit (UCB), as well as information on Clothing Allowance, Holiday Allowance, Birthday Allowance and Extraordinary Care Fund (ECF).

### Orphans Benefit and Unsupported Child's Benefit (current) as of the 1st April 2024

**Orphan's Benefit (OB):** Orphan's Benefit is a weekly payment which helps carers supporting a child or young person whose parents have died or can't be found or can't look after them because they have a serious long term health condition or incapacity.

**Unsupported Child's Benefit (UCB):** Unsupported Child's Benefit is a weekly payment which helps carers supporting a child or young person whose parents can't care for them because of a family breakdown.

#### Orphans Benefit (OB) and Unsupported Child's Benefit (UCB) current rates as of 1st April 2024.

| Category      | Non-Taxable Rate |
|---------------|------------------|
| Under 5 years | \$286.08         |
| 5 - 9 years   | \$288.06         |
| 10 - 13 years | \$310.40         |
| 14+ years     | \$332.61         |

### Holiday and Birthday Allowance

You automatically get the Holiday and Birthday Allowance if you already get Unsupported Child's Benefit or Orphan's Benefit. Use these payments to celebrate important events in the child's life, like their birthday or Christmas.

If you get Unsupported Child's Benefit or Orphan's Benefit for a child you're caring for, use the Holiday and Birthday Allowance to help pay for the costs of making the child feel special.

You get this payment two times each year. If you don't celebrate birthdays or Christmas, use the money to do something fun that makes the child feel special.

#### Holiday Allowance and Birthday Allowance current rates as of 1st April 2024.

| Category            | Rate     |
|---------------------|----------|
| Child 0 - 4 year    | \$143.04 |
| Child 5 - 9 years   | \$144.03 |
| Child 10 - 13 years | \$155.20 |
| Child 14+ years     | \$166.31 |

### Clothing Allowance for Orphan's Benefit and Unsupported Child's Benefit

**Clothing Allowance for Orphan's Benefit and Unsupported Child's Benefit:** A Clothing Allowance is a weekly payment for you if you get Orphan's Benefit or Unsupported Child's Benefit for children in your care, to help you pay for their clothing.

#### Clothing Allowance current rates as of 1st April 2024.

| Category            | Rate    |
|---------------------|---------|
| Child 0 - 4 year    | \$25.03 |
| Child 5 - 9 years   | \$28.39 |
| Child 10 - 13 years | \$35.06 |
| Child 14+ years     | \$42.06 |

**Extraordinary Care Fund:** Between 1 July to 30 June each year you can get one grant of up to \$2,000 for each child you care for. You can apply for help with technology every two years unless there are exceptional circumstances.

## Extraordinary Care Fund Applications

If you are receiving the Unsupported Child's Benefit (UCB) or Orphan's Benefit (OB) for a child you are caring for, you can apply for the Extraordinary Care Fund (ECF). **Next closing dates for the ECF are: 25 July and 27 September 2024.**

| <u>Cost Type</u>                           | <u>Cost Guide</u>                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Laptops                                    | Secondary School level - up to \$1400<br>Intermediate School level - up to \$1200<br>Primary School level - up to \$750                                                                              |
| Ipads/Tablets                              | Primary school level to secondary school level all \$500 *Under 5 years: \$500 by exception only. You can apply for help with technology every two years unless there are exceptional circumstances. |
| Musical instruments                        | Up to \$900                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Music Lessons                              | \$150 to \$250 per term                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Clothing and equipment for sports and arts | \$500 to \$1200                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Counselling                                | \$60 to \$200 per session                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Psychological fees/services                |                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Development programmes                     | initial assessment \$125 to \$180 per hour                                                                                                                                                           |
| e.g. speech development, YMCA programmes   | \$45 to \$130 per session                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Extra tuition                              | \$400 to \$880 each term                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Orthodontics                               | Up to \$2,000 per year                                                                                                                                                                               |

### You'll need to provide:

1. Proof of the cost you're applying for, for example:
  - o A quote
  - o The receipt
  - o A letter from an organiser asking for payment.

### 2. Letters of support

There may be other documents you need to provide if you're applying for help with technology, costs over \$2000, or orthodontic treatment.

### Letters of support

A letter of support explains how your child is showing promise or how they're experiencing difficulty. If you're applying for a cost that's:

- under \$500, you need one letter of support
- \$500 or more, you need 2 letters of support

The letter needs to be from an independent person, for example:

- A teacher
- Coach
- Other person of standing in the community

### Technology

If you're applying for help with technology, you need to provide documents:

- from the school with their recommended item, especially if they have a 'bring your own device' (BYOD) programme

- for anything that's significantly more expensive than what the school recommends, your letter of support will need to outline why it's needed.

You can apply for help with tablets/iPads/laptops every two years unless there are exceptional circumstances.

### Applying for costs over \$2,000

If you're applying for a cost that's more than \$2,000, you need to confirm how you can pay for the rest of the cost.

### Orthodontic treatment

If you're applying for help with orthodontic treatment, for example braces, you need to provide documents from the orthodontist with:

- the proposed treatment
- how long the treatment will take
- confirmation of any payments made so far and the balance owing

### Submit your application

You can get your completed form and documents to MSD by either:

- dropping these into your nearest service centre
- posting these to your nearest service centre.

**Email to:** [extraordinary\\_care\\_fund@msd.govt.nz](mailto:extraordinary_care_fund@msd.govt.nz)



Giselle Stalls  
National Support Manager

## A word from Giselle

It's been an eventful two months, with plenty happening across our volunteer support groups nationwide. In this edition, we extend a heartfelt thank-you and bid farewell to three of our support group coordinators in Napier, Tokoroa, and Taumarunui. However, we're also excited to welcome Robyn Hargreaves (Dannevirke) and Karina Savage (Timaru) to the team.



We extend our heartfelt thanks to Support Group Coordinators (SGC's) Beth Thurston (Napier), Debbie Newton (Tokoroa), and Shona Coster (Taumarunui). These three individuals have left a void and will be dearly missed. Throughout their tenure, they have made a profound impact, dedicating countless hours to changing the lives of many caregivers in their communities. Their unwavering support and guidance have been invaluable to those in need. Farewell with gratitude and appreciation for your commitment to Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ (GRG).

## We're excited to introduce two new Support Group Coordinators (SGCs) to the team!

Hi, I'm Robyn Hargreaves from Dannevirke, Taranua. I've raised five children who are now raising their own, and I have 11 grandchildren aged 19 to 11 months. One grandson has been with me since birth and is soon turning 11. My home is bustling with my youngest, her partner, her 6-year-old son, and my grandson's stepdad, not to mention our numerous pets. We're like a busy train station, with family members coming and going for catch-ups or after-school activities, all living within a 10-minute radius. Our close-knit family values love and togetherness, which is crucial in today's world. This supportive environment fuels my passion. That's why I've taken on the role of GRG Taranua. I've faced challenges and hardships, especially raising a grandchild with unique needs. Grandparents and Whanau Carers are the backbone of GRG, and I want to give back by sharing my knowledge and experiences to support others proactively. It's comforting to know we're not alone and that there's someone to walk alongside us on this journey when we need it.



Robyn Hargreaves, Taranua SGC

**"Volunteering is the heartbeat of community; it's the joy of giving, the warmth of connection, and the power of making a difference."**





Karina Savage, Timaru SGC

Hello, I'm Karina Savage, I live in the beautiful town of Timaru with my husband of 33 years and our 7 year old granddaughter. I'm also a proud mum of two. With a strong background in administration and management, primarily within the health and disability sector, I have been raising our granddaughter for the past 6.5 years. This journey has inspired me to extend a helping hand to other grandparents navigating the complexities of taking on a grandchild. It's an honour to join Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ (GRG), and I look forward to providing support and building connections for fellow grandparents.

## Become a Volunteer!

Your time and lived experience can make a real difference in people's lives.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ (GRG) is seeking dedicated individuals like you to volunteer as Support Group Coordinators or Coffee Group Facilitators. With over 6,284 members nationwide, GRG relies on volunteers to provide hands-on support, information support to its members across the country. By running regular Support Groups, volunteer coordinators offer invaluable peer support, allowing members to share their experiences and accumulated knowledge. If you're interested in making a difference in the lives of these families, we'd love to hear from you. Join us in our mission to support and empower grandparents raising grandchildren across New Zealand.

Contact Giselle Stalls, National Support Manager on 021 246 0553 or at [Giselle@grg.org.nz](mailto:Giselle@grg.org.nz)



## Caregiver Education

### GRG's Simply Acquired & Learned Techniques™ SALT trauma informed care workshop programme

This programme has been developed specifically for grandparents and whānau caregivers to help them learn how to increase attachment in children who have experienced trauma, and how to:

- safely de-escalate conflict, develop self-regulation and
- increase the child's resilience, feeling of stability, security, and belonging within their whānau.

**Upcoming workshops:** 10am - 2pm - Venues to be confirmed on registration

**June:** Wairarapa, Lower Hutt, Christchurch

**REGISTER NOW** at [SALT@grg.org.nz](mailto:SALT@grg.org.nz) or phone **0800 GRANDS** (0800 472 637)  
Each SALT workshop is FREE for all Grandparent Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ (GRG) registered members!



# Empower Yourself with SALT: Essential Strategies for Caregivers

We warmly invite all registered GRG grandparents and/or whanau/kin caregivers to express interest in our upcoming SALT™ (Simply Acquired & Learned Techniques) workshop training programme in your region.

This FREE programme equips caregivers with practical strategies for managing challenging behaviour exhibited by their mokopuna (grandchild) or tamariki (children) and rangatahi (young people) in their full-time care.

Whether you're a long-time or new GRG caregiver member, please reach out to the GRG National Support Office to register your interest and secure your spot in the next SALT workshop in your region today by emailing [SALT@grg.org.nz](mailto:SALT@grg.org.nz) or via phone 0800 GRANDS (0800 472 637).

## About SALT (Simply Acquired & Learned Techniques™) Trauma informed care workshop Programme

Developed by the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ (GRG), the SALT workshop is tailored specifically for our caregiver members, offering critical resources to better support and nurture resilient and healthy tamariki and rangatahi.

Research highlights the positive impact of strong relationships between grandchildren and grandparents on emotional well-being, academic performance and resilience. Therefore, we strongly encourage GRG members to attend the SALT workshop to empower themselves with practical strategies for managing challenging behaviour and conflict resolution.

Participants consistently praise the workshop's value, citing it as an excellent investment of their time. One

SALT attendee said, "Excellent and totally worth the time, I'm thrilled I came across this programme".

Grandparents attend to gain valuable knowledge and skills that benefit their own well-being and enable them to better support their grandchildren's development. SALT also fosters connection among caregivers, providing a platform to share experiences and learn from one another.

With a focus on strengthening attachment in grandchildren who have experienced trauma, SALT promotes self-regulation and resilience, contributing to the overall well-being of the child.

Understanding the underlying reasons for children's behaviour empowers caregivers to respond effectively and compassionately, reducing stress and promoting stability and belonging.

SALT is a valuable resource provided at no cost to GRG caregiver members and is provided by expert facilitators, aimed at maintaining the health of our communities and ensuring their thriving. It offers essential support and guidance for grandparents and whanau/kin caregivers navigating the challenges of raising tamariki and rangatahi.

For more information on the SALT workshop, visit the GRG website: <https://www.grg.org.nz/What+we+do/Education+and+Training/SALT+Workshop.html>



Lisa Gibson, SALT Facilitator

If you would like to know more about GRG's Simply Acquired & Learned Techniques™ SALT trauma informed care workshop programme or have any questions, please contact the GRG National Support Office on 0800 GRANDS

## Other Handy Helpline Numbers

**EMERGENCY** 111 for emergency services, fire, ambulance or police

**PLUNKETLINE** 0800 933 922 for advice on child health or parenting from a registered Plunket Nurse

**HEALTHLINE** 0800 611 116 for health triage and advice from a registered nurse.

**COVID-19** Healthline concerns 0800 358 5453

**'NEED TO TALK?'** Text 1737 Get help from a counsellor

**LIFELINE** 0800 543 354 or Text 4357 – 24/7 confidential support from qualified counsellors and trained volunteers

**YOUTHLINE** 0800 376 633 helping families and youth

**0508 CARERS** (0508 227 377) a 24/7 Caregivers Guidance and Advice Line.

**0800 WHATS UP** (0800 942 8787) is a free counselling helpline for teenagers and children run by Barnardos.

**DEPRESSION.ORG.NZ** Free text number 4202

## Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ

Established in 2001 as a registered charitable trust (CC20205), GRG supports over 5500 grandparent and whanau care families nationwide, representing around 9,000 caregivers and over 14,000 children. Our vision and kaupapa is to empower grandparent and other whanau care families to achieve positive life outcomes, through providing support, information, advice, advocacy services and caregiver education programmes.

**Donate**

Have your circumstances changed?

Our aim is to keep you informed and of what's happening, key information and opportunities that can help you. If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter or you have changed address or phone number please update your details by clicking the button below or contact us.

**Update your member details**

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

Join GRG or subscribe to our newsletter via our website or click the button below.

**Join GRG**

**Our Website**

**Donate**

Donating to GRG with One Percent Collective means that every cent donated lands in our bank account – they don't take a cut because they're a charity too! We get 100% and they handle all the admin. They even make it easy to claim a 33% rebate on your GRG Trust donations at tax time!



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 ake o mātou – We are respectful, we listen, we learn.

Please pass this newsletter on to other grandparents and whanau caregivers who need support.

Ngā mihi nui – Thank you to our Funders for their support for our newsletter.



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. This newsletter is subject to copyright. © 2024

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