



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 to join.

Inside this issue

A Word from our GM	2
Updates	3
Good news stories	4
Tricia’s Update	6
Giselle’s Update	7
Tom’s Update	8
GRG In the Media	9
Support Group Contacts	10
SGC Vacancies	11
GRG Contact Information	12
Handy Helpline Numbers	12

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!

How can we help you?

As a valued member of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren NZ whānau, we want to remind you that you’re never alone in this journey. Whether you’re facing new challenges or just need someone to talk to, we’re here to support you with:

- Legal Advocacy: We can help you understand your rights and support you through processes like guardianship and custody.
- Financial Support Guidance: Not sure what you’re entitled to? Our advocates can help you access benefits and income support, including the Unsupported Child’s Benefit.
- Peer Support Groups: Join one of our local support groups to connect with others who truly understand - a safe space to share and be heard.
- National Helpline: Need advice or just someone to talk to? Call our free 0800 GRANDS helpline for guidance, support, or simply a listening ear.
- Workshops & Wānanga: Practical sessions on trauma-informed care, parenting strategies, and self-care, designed to support both you and your mokopuna.
- Information & Advocacy: We keep you updated with news, helpful resources, and important changes, while advocating for fairer systems for caregiving whānau.

If you ever need support - big or small - please reach out.

Hello and welcome!



Sam Farquhar
General Manager

It's been a busy few months since I first started at GRG in March, and I'm really looking forward to the rest of the year. It's an exciting time to be part of the mahi here at GRG.

April and May have been busy months here at GRG, we have been lucky to receive some wonderful donations to help support members from various organisations.

Gifts and donations such as these help us provide emergency clothing, toiletries and toys to our grandparents and carers who have taken immediate guardianship without any resources to support them, and we are grateful to have the support of companies, groups and individual donors that continue to support our charity.

At National Office there has been a flurry of new projects and relationships taking place to support us in the mahi we do.

As members we know raising a second generation is no small feat. From navigating school systems that have changed drastically since your own children were young, to managing the emotional needs of your grandchildren - who may be processing loss, trauma, or change - you are doing the work of heroes. And like any hero's journey, it comes with challenges that deserve to be acknowledged.

Whether you need resources on legal guardianship, tips on parenting in today's digital world, help accessing financial support, or simply a space to share and listen.

We are lucky to have some amazing staff and extraordinary volunteers, and Christina & Tricia our advocates can support you with queries you may have when dealing with government agencies, school or other organisations, Justine our Administrator is on the other end of the phone to help with your queries and Giselle our National Support Manager can connect you with a Support Group in a community near you so you can meet others who are in a similar position and build local connections and understanding. Shannon is in charge of our funding and would love to hear from you if you have an opportunity to support us!

We also understand the emotional complexity of this journey. You may be grieving the path you expected your retirement to take or feeling the pressure of meeting your grandchild's needs while balancing your own health, finances, and energy.

Here's what we want you to remember:

- You are doing an amazing job.
- It's okay to ask for help.
- Your community GRG is here to support you

If there's something specific you need - or if you just want to share your story - please don't hesitate to reach out.

Ngā manaakitanga

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sam Farquhar".

Sam Farquhar
General Manager

Naku te rourou nau te rourou ka ora ai te iwi

With your basket and my basket the people will live



Support Groups

Each newsletter we like to showcase a few of our support groups from around the country - highlighting what they've been up to and things upcoming.

Whangarei Support Group:

Whangarei GRG have had a busy May connecting with their community of Whangarei, providing insight into who and what we offer as Grandparents Raising Grandchildren. Our Whangarei Support Group Coordinator, Lynette, has met with:

- 1. Bloomfield Special Needs School – school age 5years – 21years with physical and Intellectual Disabilities. The idea is to set up a support group for grandparents raising their grandchildren and an invitation to our monthly meetings and support. Positive encouragement for another meeting.
- 2. Te Kamo High School is a secondary (year 9 -15) co-educational. Along with a Social Worker, they are keen to create a support group for grandparents raising grandchildren.
- 3. Approached by Caring Families Aotearoa – to support and provide care along with training for whanau. They are also the guest speaker at our next event.

The next support group meeting is:
Friday 6th June 10am - 11:30am at Whangarei Care Centre, 1 Mill Road, Regent, Whangarei

Piako & Hauraki Support Group

Our Specialist Advocate Tricia Corin is speaking at the June Support Group Meeting in Paeroa. This is a great opportunity to hear firsthand what financial benefits you may be eligible for, and how to navigate these.

Please contact Jennifer for more details:
Jennifer Porter 027 683 6207 / Morrinsville@grg.org.nz

5th June 2025
Paeroa Elim Church
77 Station Road, Paeroa
10am - 12pm



Napier Support Group

A few families from the Napier Support Group enjoyed a weekend Ten Pin Bowling day in collaboration with Autism NZ in late May. It was a great time for all involved!



Good News Stories

We love to hear how GRG has helped make real changes in our members lives. In this newsletter, we are showcasing one of the stories told us from a member.

Restoring Mana and Hope: One Grandmother's Journey to Support Her Mokopuna

When a grandmother took on the care of her granddaughter, she was already facing immense personal challenges - living on a pension and managing a critical illness. Despite these hardships, one thing was clear: her granddaughter wanted to live with her, and she was determined to do whatever it took to provide a safe and loving home.

But the road to accessing the right support wasn't easy. After being told by Work and Income that she couldn't get help and never being informed about the Unsupported Child's Benefit (UCB), she was left unsure where to turn.

That's when she connected with GRG.

Our advocate equipped her with the right information, confidence, and encouragement to navigate the system. When she received a call with a WINZ appointment, she felt prepared and confident to succeed.

This grandmother later shared with us how the GRG care pack and advocacy support restored her mana. With the knowledge she gained, she walked into WINZ empowered and prepared. She was prepared for the 24 page long application after the GRG advocate gave her the guidance she needed to complete it - a small but vital piece of guidance that got her on the right track.

Thanks to her perseverance and the right support, her UCB was granted, and she received an arrears payment that made an immediate difference.

"GRG gave me back my mana," she said. "I felt confident. I could do this."

It is a beautiful reminder that when caregivers are backed with the right support, knowledge, and belief, they rise - and so do the tamariki in their care.



Volunteers Month - June

June is National Volunteers Month - a time for us to celebrate and acknowledge the volunteers that provide their time and energy to supporting GRG.

This June, we're shining a light on the heart of our GRG whānau, our incredible volunteers. Whether they're facilitating support groups, making calls to check in on members, helping out at events, or lending a hand behind the scenes - their time, care, and aroha make a world of difference.

✨ Our volunteers walk alongside caregivers every step of the way. They bring compassion, lived experience, and a listening ear - often going above and beyond to support those raising grandchildren through life's toughest moments.

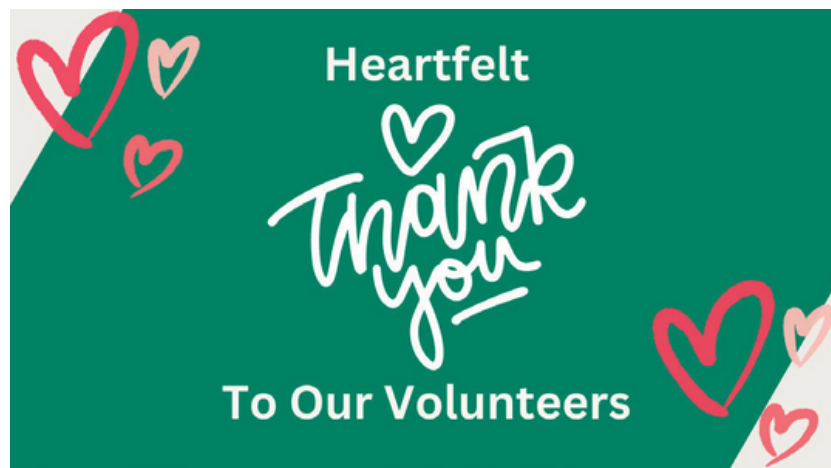
🙌 To every GRG volunteer: thank you. Your mahi helps build stronger whānau, reduce isolation, and uplift entire communities. You are the quiet champions making a loud impact.

🗣️ This Volunteers Month, we encourage everyone to:

- Reach out and thank a GRG volunteer who's made a difference in your life
- Share your volunteering story - let us celebrate you!
- Consider volunteering to raise money for GRG - get in contact and we can give you some ideas how to fundraise!

Because when we give a little time, we help create a lifetime of change.

Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou katoa – thank you for all you do. 💙



Recent Donations & Support

We're incredibly grateful for the donations and support we receive from businesses, organisations and individuals.

Winter Clothing & Blanket Donation

The team at MUFG Pension & Market Services have kindly donated 5 tubs of winter clothing and blankets for our members. Their Auckland office members have done a collection of items that will be well utilised this winter. Thank you MUFG!



Bike Donation

At a recent team building day, the awesome crew at Harmony swapped spreadsheets for spanners as they raced to build three children's bikes - all part of a fun and fast-paced challenge run by Todd from Corporate Challenge Events. But the real highlight? At the end of the day, the team chose to donate the bikes to GRG for a few lucky tamariki in our whānau.

A huge thank you to Harmony and Todd for combining team spirit with generosity — your efforts will bring big smiles and even bigger adventures to some very special kids!



Altrusa Global

Each year, Altrusa Global raise funds to purchase winter clothing and blankets for our Hamilton members. This ensures that children don't go cold through the harsh winter. We are incredibly grateful for this partnership and their generosity, which has been ongoing for the past 5 years!



Did you know that you can donate easily online to support the work we do?

We rely on donations to continue our support. Just \$10 a week helps keep our free 0800 helpline running.

[Click this link to donate](#)



Tricia Corin
Specialist Advocate
Income/Financial Support

Tricia Advocating for You

In this newsletter, I'm letting you know all about the potential benefits you may be eligible for when caring for a grandchildren. If you want support with these or need to know more, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us.

Extraordinary Care Fund Applications

The Extraordinary Care Fund helps pay for extra costs you have because a child you care for:

- shows promise in an ability, skill, or talent, for example in school, sports, dance, or music
- is experiencing difficulties that impact their development, for example learning or behavioural difficulties

You can apply if you get the Orphan's Benefit or Unsupported Child's Benefit.

Grants are made based on your child's needs and the documents that support this, not your family's financial situation.

Between 1 July to 30 June each year you can get one grant of up to \$2,000 for each child you care for.

Showing promise:

Examples of costs we can help with:

- Participating in a national Kapa Haka competition
- Attending a science academic programme or event
- Competing in a national sports competition
- Coaching, tutoring or mentoring
- Private music lessons and instrument hire or purchase

Experiencing difficulties

Examples include:

- courses or activities to:
 - develop self-esteem, physical capability, or social skills for example YMCA programmes
 - improve their ability to learn if they have learning difficulties
 - swimming lessons (if they haven't learnt to swim at school)
- orthodontic work that isn't funded by the Ministry of Health
- counselling

Below are the **Orphans Benefit and Unsupported Childs Benefit** rates at 1 April 2025. These are non-taxable, weekly rates.

Under 5 years \$292.44
5 - 9 years \$294.47
10 - 13 years \$317.30
14+ years \$340.01

Clothing Allowance rates (current)

Below are the rates of Clothing Allowance for Orphans Benefit and Unsupported Childs Benefit at 1 April 2025. These are non-taxable, weekly rates.

Child 0 - 4 years \$25.59
Child 5 - 9 years \$29.02
Child 10 - 13 years \$35.84
Child 14+ years \$43.00

Holiday Allowance and Birthday Allowance rates (current)

Below are the rates of Holiday Allowance and Birthday Allowance for Orphans Benefit and Unsupported Childs Benefit at 1 April 2025. Each of these is a non-taxable, annual rate.

Child 0 - 4 years \$146.22
Child 5 - 9 years \$147.24
Child 10 - 13 years \$158.65
Child 14+ years \$170.01





Giselle Stalls
National Support Manager

A word from Giselle

Finding support in others made easy

Kia ora koutou,
It's been incredibly heartening to see our Support and Coffee Groups continuing to grow across the country amidst so much change. Every new connection we build helps reduce the isolation many of our GRG caregivers, and I'm so proud of the amazing work our coordinators are doing on the ground.

Recently, we ran a social media drive to find Support Group Coordinators in areas where we don't currently have groups. If you feel you have the time and capability to lead a group in your area, we'd love to hear from you! Please get in touch with Giselle at giselle@grg.org.nz.

Joining a GRG Support Group offers much more than just a cuppa and a chat—it provides a lifeline of emotional support, practical parenting tips, access to vital resources, and a community that truly understands the unique challenges of raising grandchildren.



Growing Support in the Western Bay of Plenty

We're especially excited about developments in the Western Bay of Plenty where we now have an amazing coordinator ready to support whānau:

Whaea Rae Midwood – Te Puke, Papamoa, Oropi, Maketu + surrounding areas
Email: wbop@grg.org.nz

He uri ahau o Mai I nga kuri a wharei ki tihirau, no te Tauranga moana ki Whanau a Apanui...
I am a Māori descendant of those who originated from Tauranga to Cape Runaway on the East Coast of Aotearoa, New Zealand.
My name if Raewyne Yvonne Midwood, I consider myself to be a very proud mana-wahine Māori. I currently reside at Te Puke, Western Bay of Plenty. I am a kuia raising and responsible for my 4 mokopuna aged from 11years down to 3 years, two girls and two boys respectively. We have been doing life together since October 2020.



Updates from around the country

Support Groups:

- **West Coast:** Big news coming! We've got a fantastic new coordinator in Greymouth—can't wait to introduce her in the next newsletter.
- **Taumarunui:** Great to see this group reconnecting. We would like to extend a huge vote of thanks to REAP for the venue and support. Feedback was that it was a real success!
- **Manawatū:** We're rebuilding this group and have found the perfect person to lead it. While we get things underway, you're welcome to join the local Coffee Group—contact the GRG National Office and we'll connect you with Carolyn.
- **Auckland Central:** We're pleased to welcome Denise as the new Support Group Coordinator for Auckland Central. Denise brings a wealth of lived experience as a grandparent raising her own mokopuna, and we're confident she'll provide strong, compassionate leadership for the group – email aucklandcentral@grg.org.nz

Denise Ferris (Auckland Central)

I'm a grandmother raising my 3 mokopuna, a journey that began in 2020. I became their guardian on the second day of the COVID-19 lockdown in Auckland. At the time, I was boarding, but when my moko came into my care, we urgently needed somewhere to live. We spent the next two years living in Emergency Housing, facing many challenges together. Throughout it all, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) became—and continues to be—a lifeline for both me and my moko, offering vital support, guidance, and connection.



Coffee Groups:

Our coffee groups are a more informal group that provides the opportunity for anyone to have a korero over a coffee, tea and some yummy baking. Non-members and members can attend coffee groups to get an understanding of what GRG do and how we can provide support.

We're excited to announce three new coffee groups starting up:

- Donna – Christchurch North
- Gina – Waitakere
- Carolyn – Palmerston North

A reminder that our Birkenhead Coffee Group is run the first Tuesday of every month at our National Support Office, 162 Mokoia Road, Birkenhead from 10am.



Community Advocates Corner



Tom Harris
Community Advocate

A goodbye from Tom

As Tom departs from GRG - his maternity leave contract covering Christina is finishing up - he wanted to highlight and tell us about the family court navigators. Family Court Navigators - Kaiārahi are an important member of the court system that can provide support in person.

Kaiārahi are here to guide and support whānau, including grandparents, as they deal with the Family Court. While they don't offer legal advice, they can walk alongside you before and during the court process — helping you feel informed, confident, and connected to the support you need.

Here's how Kaiārahi can help:

- Before court: They can talk with you about your situation and help you find community services that might support you to sort out care arrangements without going to court.
- During court: If court becomes necessary, Kaiārahi can help you understand what's happening, what the legal language means, and what the process involves.
- Throughout the process: They work to make sure you stay involved and that any barriers (like understanding the system, getting to appointments, or knowing what support is available) don't stop you from being part of decisions that affect your mokopuna.
- Connecting you to the right support: With your agreement, they can link you to other services — whether it's counselling, parenting support, or help with practical needs.

Returning from maternity leave

Christina has returned from maternity leave and is ready to support members as our community advocate.

She gave birth to a healthy baby boy, Joshua, late last year and has enjoyed spending those first months with him. He's settling into daycare well and Christina is excited to be back with GRG.

As our Senior Community Advocate, she is here to help you navigate the many different supports out there for you and the children in your care. She can help you understand the Family Court process, make you aware of your rights and realistic expectations for final court orders, or can also help link you in with specialised support groups for you and your children's individual needs. Reach out to Christina at any time, no question is too big or too small.



Christina Howe
Senior Community Advocate

From the front desk

It's been a busy month at the front desk - answering the phones, directing enquiries, organising all our data and ensuring that everyone is provided with fast support. As it comes into winter, Justine has started to organise all the winter gear to be sent out to those who need it.

A reminder that there are two public holidays coming up: Monday 2nd June and Monday 21st June where our office will be closed. We will be back open on the Tuesday's following.

As always, please don't hesitate to give Justine a call on 0800 GRANDS if you need support.



Justine Gibb
Client Services Admin



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 6500 grandparent and whanau care families nationwide, representing around 10,000 caregivers and over 16,000 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!



E hara taku toa i te toa takitahi, he toa takitini.

My strength is not as an individual, but as a collective.

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

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust New Zealand
Suite C, Chelsea Business Park, 162 Mokoia Rd, Birkenhead, Auckland 0626
PO Box 34892, Birkenhead, Auckland 0746
Free Helpline: 0800 GRANDS | 0800 472 637
Phone: +64 9 418 3753 | Email: office@grg.org.nz

