



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 toll free on
0800 GRANDS or visit
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 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’s Benefit (UCB) or the Orphan’s
Benefit (OB) to help with the costs of raising the child.

The Unsupported Child’s 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.



Tatum McKay
Interim Chief Executive

Hello and welcome!

Spring is often thought of as a time of new beginnings and of transition. That can certainly be said for the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) National Support Office (NSO) this month as we take this opportunity to introduce and welcome two new arrivals and bid two farewells.

Firstly, a thank you and farewell to Brad Clark, who is moving on as CEO to spend more time with his family before a wonderful summer break. While Brad had been with GRG for less than a year, his commitment to GRG's mission, values and kaupapa has been evident and deeply appreciated. We wish you every success for your next ventures Brad!

We are also saying farewell to Christina Howe, Senior Community Advocate, although a temporary one, as she embarks on her most important journey yet, motherhood! Thank you, Christina, for all your mahi and I am sure our NSO team, volunteers and caregiver members join me in wishing you and your partner joy and happiness as you prepare to welcome your baby.

That brings me to the first of our welcomes! Nau mai haere mai to Tom Harris. Tom is covering for Christina while she is on parental leave and comes from an extensive background of community service support and advocacy based on equity of opportunity for those who need support. Tom brings a calm and experienced demeanour with him and I am personally excited to learn from him over the next few months.

Finally, by way of introduction, kia ora I'm Tatum McKay. I'd like to share my own experience with whānau care in the hope that it provides some insight into my commitment to this kaupapa.

In 2014 I took over the care of my then 14 year old sister (25 years my junior) after the sudden passing of our father.

On top of dealing with my own grief of losing my father I had to suddenly figure out how to step in for a young teenaged girl, who in the space of 4 years had become orphaned and was struggling with a variety of mental-health challenges. I was also mother to a 4 year old, working full-time and watching my relationship with my child's father circle the drain.

I didn't know then that I could reach out to a local volunteer support group coordinator or coffee group facilitator, who would understand first hand what our little whānau was dealing with, or find other whānau care families who could relate and empathise but also put it all into perspective. I would have given quite a lot to have that wrapped around us. I could have also really benefit from Tricia or Tom, a phone call away, to help navigate the court system when I was seeking guardianship or how to get what I needed from Work and Income (WINZ).

So, when I had the opportunity a little while ago to apply to serve on the board of GRG I jumped at the chance. I jumped again more recently when the board asked if I would step in to help as interim CEO while recruiting a new permanent leader.

Organisations like GRG are built on the mahi and aroha of people like our NSO team, volunteers and caregiver members. People who are willing to step up and to help others rise up with them.

What a privilege it is to work for this community and alongside the rest of the GRG NSO team. I am tremendously excited to serve you all and I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible over the next few months.

Ngā manaakitanga

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tatum'.

Tatum McKay
Tatum@grg.org.nz

*Naku te rourou nau te rourou ka ora ai te iwi
With your basket and my basket the people will live*



Christina Howe
Senior Community Advocate

Overview of the Family Court Process

If we find ourselves in need of making applications to the Family Court, we can find ourselves in a very daunting situation. The aim of this article is to try and understand the initial stages of progressing through our Family Court system.

Before applying to the Family Court, you would usually need to at least attempt mediation within the past 12 months and also attend a Parenting Through Separation course within the past two years. The exemptions to attending these courses include that you are applying for an urgent order, the proceedings are under Oranga Tamariki, the applications are being filed by consent, there is a history of family violence, or any such reason that means you could not participate effectively i.e. sustained illicit drug use by one of the parties would make mediation impossible. Most of our members fall into the exemptions to attending these courses.

The first question you then need to consider when filing applications in the Family Court is whether you need an urgent decision from the court. The threshold for applying urgently is any delay would or might entail serious injury or undue hardship or risk to the personal safety of yourself /the children. Some examples of what this means, include if another person is being violent or abusive towards yourself / the children, there is a threat that the children will be uplifted from your care by another person, or making the applications might cause another person's unpredictable behaviour to escalate.

Whether you are applying urgently or non-urgently, you will need to complete the appropriate application form and swear or affirm an affidavit.

An important point to remember is that everything you write in the application form and affidavit will be seen and read by the other parties. However, you can request that the Family Court keep your personal information confidential i.e. your phone number, email, and address. Make sure any documents you file with the Family Court are printed single sided and are filled in using a blue or black pen if done by hand.

If you are not the children's parent or legal guardian you must ask the Family Court's permission to apply for court orders in relation to children's care. To do this, you must tick the 'eligibility (leave to apply)' box on page one when you complete the application form.

When you are ready to file your applications you can do so either via post, electronically, or in person. Keep in mind that if you are filing urgently then you would want to do so via electronically or in person.

There is a fee for filing an application for a Parenting Order or to change / cancel a Parenting Order. This fee is currently \$242 per application. You can apply for a Fee Waiver on grounds such as you are receiving Legal Aid, you are receiving a benefit from Work and Income or living off your superannuation, or if you can prove to the Family Court that paying the fee will cause you financial hardship. Feel free to ask us or your local Family Court for the Fee Waiver application form.



If you have any questions or want to find out more, please contact the GRG National Support Office on 0800 GRANDS (0800 472 637).

So, what happens once you file your applications in the Family Court. This will depend on whether you have filed urgently or non-urgently. If you filed urgently then the first step in the process is a Family Court Judge will read your application in their Chambers. If the Judge agrees that your case is urgent, they may make an interim order without notice. This is usually within 24-48 hours. This means the order, such as a Parenting Order, will be made before the other parties are told about the applications. This order will always be interim, or temporary, as the other parties have a right to tell their side before any final order is made.

If you filed non-urgent applications or the Judge does not agree your case is urgent, the Family Court will give a copy, or serve, your applications to the other parties. They will be given time to respond which is set at 21 days by default unless the Judge changes this timeframe. If the other parties do respond, you will be given a copy of their response.

Whether you filed urgently and now have an interim order in place, or whether you filed non-urgently / the Judge did not agree your case was urgent, the other parties will be given their time to respond to your applications. From here it is more than likely the Family Court will appoint a Lawyer for Child to understand the children's views and present them to the Family Court. You will also likely be given your first court date which is more often than not called a Directions Conference.

A Directions Conference is a 15 minute conference in front of a Family Court Judge where the Judge essentially wants to know what direction the parties wish to go with the case i.e. where to from here. Before this court date the other parties should have had their time to respond to your application so everybody should be aware of what each person wants.

Depending on the circumstances of each individual case a number of things can happen from here. Common examples could include the Judge wanting a specialist, cultural, or social worker's report to be completed on the parties and the children, the Judge requesting drug testing or allowing time for drug / alcohol programmes to be completed, allowing time for family violence programmes to be completed, or allowing time for further evidence to be filed. The next court date could be another Directions Conference to see where to from here, or the Judge might think a Judge led mediation, called a Settlement Conference, might help move the case towards an agreement, or the Judge may direct the case straight to a hearing if it is unlikely an agreement could be reached.

How long your case will take to progress through the Family Court depends on a number of things. These include how long other people take to respond to your application, what other type of information the Judge may ask for such as reports or courses to be completed, and how soon the Family Court can give you a date for your next court appearance.

Each application before the Family Court is different and will take a different path. The best thing you can do to help your case move through the Family Court quickly is provide the information requested from you within the timeframes directed by the Judge, work with the professionals involved in your case, and provide as much relevant information as possible.

Always remember we are only a phone call away to bounce ideas off, provide insight into what the Judge may have asked you to do / provide, and ensure you have the correct forms.





Tricia Corin
Specialist Advocate
Income/Financial Support

Tricia Advocating for You

Family Boost Tax Credit

We're excited to share that the FamilyBoost Tax Credit from Inland Revenue is now available to support eligible parents and caregivers with the costs of early childhood education (ECE) from licensed providers. This financial assistance helps ease the burden of childcare expenses, making quality early learning more accessible.

Eligibility

Eligible parents or caregivers can claim up to 25% of their remaining childcare costs after accounting for the 20 hours of ECE and any childcare assistance received from MSD for licensed early childhood education.

Here are examples of assistance available from MSD to help parents and caregivers with the costs of licensed early childhood education:

- Childcare Subsidy
- Early Learning Payment
- Guaranteed Childcare Assistance Payment
- Training Incentive Allowance

Family Boost Tax Credit lump sum payments

- Starting 1 October 2024, parents and caregivers can submit invoices to Inland Revenue for the remaining ECE costs incurred over the previous three months.
- Inland Revenue will provide a lump sum payment of up to \$75 per week per eligible household for the Family Boost Tax Credit, covering the three-month period.

Income and Asset exemption

Any FamilyBoost Tax Credit received from Inland Revenue will not be considered chargeable income or a cash asset for 12 months from the date the parent or caregiver receives each payment. This ensures it won't affect eligibility for the following benefits or support:

- New Zealand Superannuation and Veteran's Pension

Main Benefits:

- Emergency Benefit
- Jobseeker Support
- Sole Parent Support
- Supported Living Payment – health condition, injury, disability or total blindness
- Supported Living Payment – caring for a person
- Youth Payment
- Young Parent Payment

The Following Types of Assistance:

- Accommodation Supplement
- Advance Payment of Benefit
- Childcare Assistance
- Community Costs
- Disability Allowance
- Employment and Work Readiness Assistance
- Flexible Funding Assistance
- Funeral Grant
- Home Help
- Housing Support Products
- Income-Related Rent
- New Employment Transition Grant
- Recoverable Assistance Payment
- Residential Care Subsidy and Loan

- Seasonal Work Assistance
- Social Rehabilitation Assistance
- Special Benefit
- Special Needs Grant
- Student Allowance Transfer Grant
- Student Allowance
- Temporary Additional Support

Can you get Family Boost?

Eligibility for the FamilyBoost Tax Credit depends on who provides care for your children, your household income, and the type of childcare services you pay for. Want to check if your ECE provider is licensed or see how household income is calculated?

Find out more and register for FamilyBoost here: <https://www.ird.govt.nz/familyboost/can-you-get-familyboost/income-used-for-familyboost>

Eligibility

You may be able to receive Family Boost if:

- You are the caregiver of a child or children aged 5 and under.
- You have a household income of less than \$45,000 a quarter or \$180,000 a year.
- You have costs from a licensed early childhood education (ECE) provider.
- You are a tax resident of New Zealand.

Please Note: If you have a partner, only one of you can register for FamilyBoost and check if your ECE provider is licensed.

Care Arrangements

Separated caregivers or those caregivers living in different households may be eligible to claim the FamilyBoost Tax Credit if they:

- Provide some day-to-day care for the child or children.
- Have incurred costs for Early Childhood Education (ECE).
- Submit separate invoices for those costs.

Learn How Household Incomes Are Calculated for FamilyBoost

To understand how to calculate household incomes for the FamilyBoost Tax Credit, visit this link: <https://www.ird.govt.nz/familyboost/can-you-get-familyboost/income-used-for-familyboost>

Next Steps

Ready to take action? Here's how to register for and claim your FamilyBoost in myIR:

- Register for Family Boost: <https://www.ird.govt.nz/familyboost/register-for-familyboost>
- Claim Your Family Boost: <https://www.ird.govt.nz/familyboost/claim-your-familyboost>

If you have any questions about Child Support please contact the GRG National Support Office on 0800 GRANDS (0800 472 637) to speak with our Specialist Income/Financial Support Advocate.



Have you ever considered volunteering?

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) is currently seeking volunteer Support Group Coordinators for the following regions; Kaitia, Dargaville, Hibiscus Coast, Waitakere, Henderson, Glen Eden, Mangere, Hamilton East, Te Awamutu, Taupo, Whakatane, Whanganui, Central West Coast, Ashburton, Christchurch and Otago Coastal.

If you are interested in finding out more, please contact Giselle Stalls, National Support Manager, on 021 246 0553, Giselle@grg.org.nz or 0800 GRANDS (0800 472 637).



Giselle Stalls
National Support Manager

A word from Giselle

Finding support in others made easy

As Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ (GRG) marks its 23rd birthday, we reflect with gratitude on the incredible journey that began in 1999 and grew into a charitable trust in 2001.

In this edition, we showcase two inspiring volunteer support group coordinators, Cheryl and Lynette, who bring passion and expertise to their roles in Kaikohe and Whangārei. Their leadership helps strengthen the GRG community, ensuring that caregivers and their mokopuna receive the support they need to thrive.

We also extend congratulations to the Papakura, Napier and Wellington support groups for their success in the Z Good in the Hood campaign! Thank you to Z Papakura North, Z Kennedy Road and Z Constable Street for supporting these groups and making a positive difference in their communities.

If you'd like to get involved, look for a group in your area at the back of this newsletter or contact the GRG National Support Office toll-free on 0800 472 637. Being part of a group provides connection, learning, and strength through shared experiences.

Here's to 23 years of connection, empowerment and compassion—and many more to come!

23 Years of Empowering Caregivers: Celebrating the Heart and Legacy of GRG



Founded in 1999 and officially established as a charitable trust in 2001, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ (GRG) has spent the past 23 years making an extraordinary difference in the lives of thousands of grandparent and whānau care families across Aotearoa, New Zealand.

We recently had the privilege of celebrating this milestone alongside some of our incredible volunteers, reflecting on the impact GRG has made over the years. From our early beginnings to where we stand today, GRG's journey has been shaped by the enduring dedication, passion and kindness of everyone involved.

To our remarkable team of employees, volunteers and trustees, both past and present, thank you for your tireless efforts. Your compassion and commitment have touched countless lives and continue to inspire those around you. Each one of you plays a role in making GRG a beacon of hope, transforming challenges into opportunities and

providing a lifeline for families in need. We are truly honoured to stand beside you as we work together to create a better future for our tamariki and rangatahi.

A heartfelt thank you goes to our amazing volunteers, whose generosity and willingness to give back form the heart of what we do. Whether you're running a support group, hosting a coffee morning or lending a listening ear, your efforts make a world of difference. These gatherings offer more than just social connection—they provide a safe space where caregivers can share their experiences, find strength in each other and know they are not alone on their journey.

Your contributions are invaluable and we deeply appreciate everything you do to uplift our caregiver members and their whānau. Thank you for being part of the GRG family and helping us continue our mission.

Connect with a Support Group Near You

Finding a local volunteer support group or coffee group is a great way to meet others on a similar journey and build meaningful connections. At the back of this newsletter, you'll find a list of support groups across New Zealand, or you can call the GRG National Support Office on 0800 472 637 to get connected.

Our groups offer more than just a friendly meet-up—they provide opportunities to share experiences, grow together, and build a network of understanding and encouragement. You'll also gain access to practical caregiver education, including specialised workshops like GRG's SALT programme, designed to help caregivers navigate the challenges of raising children affected by trauma.

Joining a group means you're never alone—there's always someone who understands and can support you along the way.

Spotlight on our Northland Support: Meet Cheryl from Kaikohe and Lynette from Whangārei



Cheryl London – Coffee Group Facilitator

My husband and I have recently retired and returned to our whenua in the Hokianga. I have experience in teaching, special needs, learning and behaviour, and supporting and coordinating whānau. I also have a qualification in Mental Health and Addictions, which adds to my kete of what I can offer to grandparents raising their moko.



Lynette Springford – Whangārei SGC

Tēnā koe, nau mai, haere mai. Whangārei GRG support group coordinator is a role I'm honoured to do.

I recognise that both children and families thrive with appropriate support, and I believe that investing in our children is essential to our country's future.

I am passionate about life and helping others. I come from a background as a trained special needs teacher, meeting their needs through advocacy, co-ordinating and programs that included community activities also travel holidays for and with clients.

My passion lies in all thing's family and community.

Z Good in the Hood – Fueling Support and Spreading Good Vibes!



Napier Support Group and Z Kennedy Road

Four Action-Packed Days of Fun for 60+ Auckland Tamariki at The Y Camp Adair!

Thanks to the generous support of MFS Sydney, St John's Orewa and The Catalytic Foundation, over 60 tamariki enjoyed an action-packed experience at our GRG Specific Respite Camp at The Y Camp Adair in Hunua!

The camp was filled with exciting activities that kept everyone on their toes. From sliding down the mudslide and testing their aim with archery, to scaling the climbing wall and braving the high ropes, every moment was a thrilling new adventure. For those seeking a creative outlet, arts and crafts offered a fun way to wind down and unleash their inner artist.

In between activities, tamariki made new friends, bonded over shared experiences, and embraced the outdoors in ways they'll never forget. From raft-building challenges to the iconic two-wire bridge each activity encouraged teamwork, confidence and resilience.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who made this camp possible—your support created unforgettable memories for these young ones. We look forward to more adventures in the future!

Keep an eye out for details on the next camp—who knows what exciting experiences are coming next!



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.

REGISTER NOW at 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!

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!



One Percent Collective
regular giving made easy

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.



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