



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.

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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 6,000+ member families and all our non-member subscribers!

Kate's Take

Meri Kirihimete! Kia ora koutou katoa. A very warm welcome and Merry Christmas greetings to all our members and especially to the 101 new members who have joined GRG since September!

Over the past nine weeks, there has been a lot of activity on many fronts and there isn't the space to cover it in depth in this newsletter, but I am delighted to share some highlights on the following pages and to welcome our new Support Coordinators to the GRG team. See Merle's update on [page 7](#).

Thank you Zonta!

Karla (GRG Communications & Projects Coordinator) and our Hamilton West Support Group Coordinator, share the highlights from the Zonta Yellow Rose Run and Walk to raise funds for our 'trauma informed' caregiver workshop programme called SALT.

We are absolutely delighted at the brilliant coordination and enthusiasm shown by everyone involved.

A special thank you to Zonta International's District 16 (NZ) Governor, Phillippa Jacobs-Lory, the Canterbury Zonta Clubs, the team at Pinnacle & Co, and all the corporate and business sponsors who generously supported and got behind this wonderful event to support GRG!

Congratulations Anne Donnell!

On 1 December 2022, Governor General Dame Cindy Kiro, presented a Foster Care Excellence Award to our Rotorua Support Group Coordinator. It was an honour for Judith McKay (GRG Trustee), Lisa Braid, Lorna Hurihanganui, Cecilee Donovan, Phillippa Wilson and I to celebrate this momentous occasion with her at Government House in Wellington. She was one of eight deserving award recipients recognised for their extraordinary commitment, not only to the children in their care but also to their community. Her contribution to GRG over the past seven years and to her mokopuna has been extraordinary. In the face of many challenges Anne has demonstrated strength, courage and humility. Whenever I pass on positive feedback on her work or comments from members, she is always gracious noting that however much she gives, she gets back "ten-fold from the members" and that she just enjoys "bringing people together, breaking down barriers and creating a safe environment for caregivers to feel comfortable." Congratulations!

Thank You Bruce Hopkins!

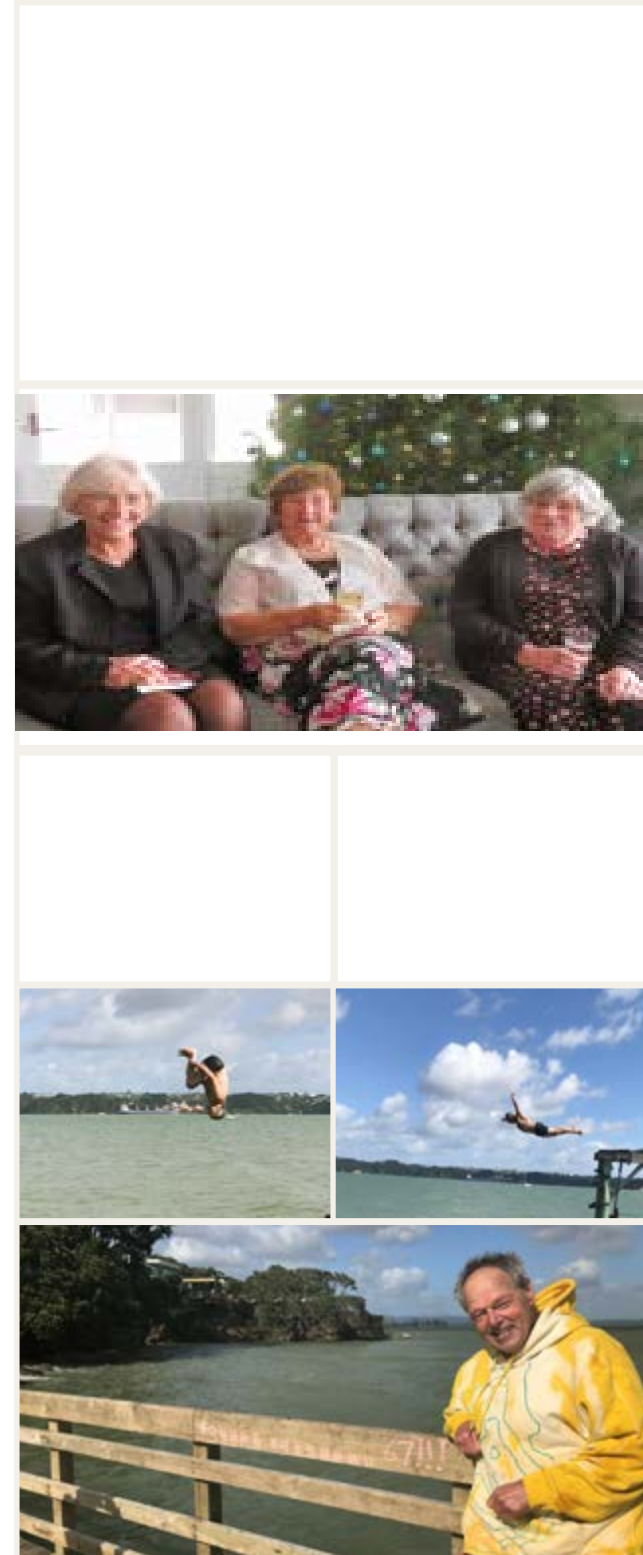
Recently Bruce (LOTR actor and GRG Ambassador) contacted me with his 'crazy' idea to fundraise for GRG by performing 67 back-flip somersaults off the Wairangi Reserve Wharf in Herne Bay to mark his 67 years on this planet. I wondered seriously what planet he was on, but a couple of days later he had a Givealittle campaign sorted challenging the public to donate to GRG and sponsor his feat.

On his 67th birthday I nervously met him, his son Tom, a reporter and cameraman to witness this crazy feat. Bruce had assured me he had managed 20 in a stretch previously, so he was determined he would do it. And he did. In just an hour he performed 67 back-flip somersaults plus a 68th leap as a swan dive off the wharf. To date he has raised \$2,586 for GRG. Thank you Bruce - you are a legend!

Kiwibank Local Hero

The Kiwibank New Zealander of the Year Awards recently announced the finalists of the 2023 awards, including 100 local heroes. We are delighted to announce that Shirley Afoa, our Papakura Support Group Coordinator has been named as a Kiwibank Local Hero. Congratulations Shirley and thank you on behalf of GRG and our members in the Papakura and South Auckland area for your wonderful support and commitment to making a difference in the lives of so many in your community.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge and thank all our staff, volunteers, funders, sponsors and supporters for all you have done for GRG this year. We couldn't provide our services that make a difference to so many lives without your help. As we wind down for the year, my wish for all our member



families and you all is that young and old will experience the magic of Christmas, with lots of love, laughter and peace within your whānau. May you all have the opportunity to start the new year ahead feeling happy and refreshed!

Kia tau te rangimarie me

te aroha. Meri kirihimete!

Love and peace to you

all this Christmas!

Kate Bundle
Chief Executive



Hannah's Outreach

It's been a tough year for a lot of people, and with the festive season just around the corner, many families are feeling the strain. If buying presents and putting food on the table feels beyond your reach this year, don't worry – there are organisations that can help.

Whether you need gifts for your kids, extra kai or just some company, here are a few places you can go for a helping hand.

And if the stress of Christmas is putting added pressure on your mental health remember there are a number of national agencies who work around the clock who you are always able to contact if you need to talk. In this month's newsletter I will introduce a number of organisations who may come in handy during this time of year.

City Missions

The charity is running a phone system and drive-through collection for Christmas food parcels and presents to avoid people waiting in queues. FREE Call 0800 223 663 if you would like to receive a parcel. At the end of each phone assessment, the caller will be given a time to pick up the food and gifts for whānau. There are city missions based in Auckland, Wellington, Palmerston North and Christchurch

Christchurch City Mission has shifted its Christmas lunch venue to the Linwood Rugby Club, where about 1000 guests are expected. The Mission says it will look after everyone who turns up, and Santa is ready to give out gifts to children. Wellington City Mission can be contacted on 04 245 0900 for help at Christmas – it feeds, and gift presents to thousands each year.

The Salvation Army

You can find your local Sallies by doing a quick Google search or asking your local CAB – like every year, they're helping out with food and presents for the festive season.

www.salvationarmy.org.nz

Food banks

Food banks are often able to offer Christmas parcels as well as basic groceries. Money Hub has handy directories of food banks in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Northland and Waikato.

Foodbank directories have a handy search tool also where you are able to find somewhere handy to you – here is the link: <https://www.foodbank.co.nz/foodbanks>

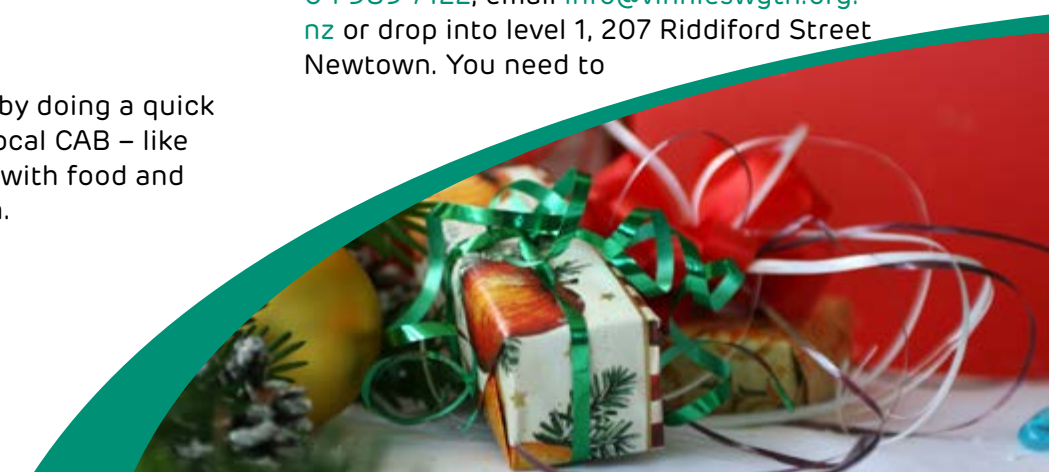
Some services require you to meet certain criteria. You can phone ahead to see if there's anything you need to bring.

You can also visit your local pātaka kai, or roadside community pantry. You don't need an appointment and there are no forms to fill out – just swing past your closest one and see what's on the shelves. Take what you need and leave what you can.

St Vincent de Paul

If you're in Wellington, Vinnies can help with presents as it transforms into a festive toy shop for A Merry Vinnies Christmas. Unwrapped, donated gifts for children aged up to 16 are displayed for whānau to come and choose from.

To book a 15-minute "shopping slot", call 04 389 7122, email info@vinnieswgtg.org.nz or drop into level 1, 207 Riddiford Street Newtown. You need to



be a Wellington-based parent or caregiver and show a benefit breakdown or Community Services Card.

Community Lunches

If you're short of family to share Christmas with, or food to put on the table, don't despair – there are still ways for you to enjoy Christmas lunch. Orewa Community Centre will be hosting a community Christmas lunch. There's no need to book, just turn up from 11.30am for a midday feed.

Ministry of Social Development

If you urgently need somewhere to stay or an emergency food grant, contact the Ministry of Social Development (MSD): FREE call 0800 599 009 or visit your closest centre. And remember we have our amazing Financial Advocate, Tricia Corrin if you need assistance navigating WINZ.

Emotional and Crisis support

If you or a member of your whanau require immediate mental health support during this at times stressful time of year – remember although we will be shut during the Christmas period, there are many organisations and helplines that will be working through.

Need to talk

Free call or text 1737 any time for support from a trained counsellor.

Lifeline 0800 543 354 (0800 LIFELINE) or free text 4357 (HELP).

Youthline 0800 376 633 free text 234 or email talk@youthline.co.nz or online chat.

Samaritans 0800 726 666

Suicide Crisis Helpline 0508 828 865 (0508 TAUTOKO)

Healthline 0800 611 116

And remember above all to be kind, gentle and patient with yourself during this time of year.

Enjoy your time with your whānau and we will see you all back in 2023.

Happy Holidays!

Hannah Morris
Community Outreach Advocate



If you would like help or have any questions, please contact the GRG National Support Office on 0800 GRANDS or office@grg.org.nz

Our office will be closed for Christmas from 12pm on 23 December 2022 and will reopen at 9am on Monday 9 January 2023

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 for it 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 472 637 or call our National Support Office on 09 418 3753 for a referral to our advocate, Tricia Corrin.

Tricia Advocating for You

Hello Everyone, with Christmas just around the corner, this does add a lot of stress and pressure on everyone, especially our wonderful caregivers. Here are a few reminders that I hope will help.

Holiday and Birthday Allowance

All Caregivers who are receiving the **Unsupported Child's Benefit (UCB)** or **Orphans Benefit (OB)** for a child in their care, will receive the Holiday Allowance. This is automatically paid from Work & Income 2 weeks before Christmas.

- This is paid for every child you receive the UCB for, from age newborn to 18 years.
- It is non-Taxable and you do not have to pay it back to Work & Income (WINZ).
- The Birthday Allowance is the same. It is paid 2 weeks before a child's birthday.

Holiday and Birthday Allowance Rates

Child Age	Amount \$
0-4 years	\$127.48
5-9 years	\$128.36
10-13 years	\$138.31
14+ years	\$148.21

School & Year Start Up Payment

This is available for every child receiving the UCB or OB, BUT - you must apply for it as it is not paid automatically!

There will be a link on our website and Facebook page when SAYSUP online applications are available in mid-January, but if you do not have access to a computer, you can use the computers at any Library or Work & Income. Please call us if you have any questions around this payment. 0800 472 637.

What is this payment for?

This payments is to help with the costs a caregiver typically has for a child at the beginning of the year such as school uniforms, clothing, shoes, bags, stationery, fees etc.

There is a lot of misunderstanding out there around who can receive the SAYSUP payment. **It is for ALL children for whom you receive the UCB or OB and it applies from age 0-18 years.**

It is NOT an automatic payment made by Work & Income. You must apply for it. The Online form is only available from the middle of January until the end of February. Most people will receive a reminder from Work & Income but in our experience many often dont get it.

School & Year Start Up Payment Rates

Child Age	Amount \$
0-4 years	\$400
5-9 years	\$450
10-13 years	\$500
14+ years	\$550

Extraordinary Care Fund

The next round for this fund closes mid-February 2023.

This fund is to help with the costs for a child to participate in extra-curricular activities where they may show promise, skill or a talent or for a child who is experiencing difficulties and needs extra support.

Examples include fees for sports, music, drama, dance, martial arts equipment for them to participate, extra tuition, orthodontic/ dental treatment necessary and online learning devices such as laptops or tablets/ iPads for schooling.

- All children receiving the UCB/OB are eligible to apply.
- You can apply for up to \$2,000 per child per year.
- The funding year is from 1 July to 30 June.
- Grants are made based on your child's needs and the documents that support this, not your family's financial situation.

Documents needed to support an Extraordinary Care Fund Application?

You will need a quote, invoice or receipt for the costs and '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

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. A good example of this is orthodontic treatment and braces. In these cases you need to provide documents from the orthodontist with an outline of the proposed treatment, how long the treatment will take and confirmation of any payments made so far and the balance owing.

We encourage you to get your ECF applications in as soon as possible in the new year as the next funding round closes in mid-February.

If you need help with this type of application, please contact us on [0800 472 637](tel:0800472637)

Technology and Costs Guidelines

Cost Type`	Cost Guide
Laptops	Secondary school level: up to \$1,400 Intermediate school level: up to \$1,200 Primary school level: up to \$750
Tablets/iPads	Primary school level to secondary school level: all \$500 Under 5 years: \$500 by exception only
[NOTE: You can apply for help with technology every two years unless there are exceptional circumstances]	
Music Lessons	\$150 to \$250 each term
Musical Instruments	Up to \$900
Clothing and equipment for sports and arts	\$500 to \$1,200
Counselling, psychological fees and services	\$60 to \$200 per session
Development programmes e.g. Speech, YMCA	Initial assessment \$125 to \$180 per hour \$45 to \$130 per session
Extra tuition	\$400 to \$880 each term
Orthodontics	Up to \$2,000 (per year)

Remember: You don't need an appointment to take your paperwork in to Work & Income, but we do recommend that if you take it into them in hard copy format that you take a photocopy or ask them to give you a photocopy of it before you leave their office. If you prefer, you can send your application to them directly by email to: extraordinary_care_fund@msd.govt.nz

**Have a Wonderful Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!
Best wishes, Tricia**



Tricia Corin
**Specialist Advocate
Income/Financial
Support**

Merle's Support Group Update

Greetings Everyone! Christmas brings the promise of family and whānau getting together celebrating what is the closest to a normal Christmas since the pandemic began.

It's also the drawing to-an-end of another challenging year marked by the rising cost of living, making food, petrol and the necessities of life, more expensive.

We would like to acknowledge and thank all the agencies and individual's that have generously supported our grandparents in these hard times, especially those that are giving our grandparents and grandchildren a chance to experience a joyful and happy Christmas.

GRG's volunteer Support Group Coordinators have given another year of their time and energy to support our growing whānau of members. I acknowledge and thank them all for their hard work and dedication in these roles making grandparents' lives that little bit more manageable and fulfilling.

New SGC Appointments

We are delighted to welcome the following new appointments to our Support Group Coordinator Team.

Martine Donnelly

Martine is setting up a new support group for members in the Hamilton East district. She is well suited to this role having the experience of raising grandchildren herself and her work alongside our Hamilton West Support Group Coordinator, Pat Davis over the past few years. Martine says she has found GRG very supportive in the past and is now wanting to pay it forward by reaching out to others in need. Welcome to the team Martine!



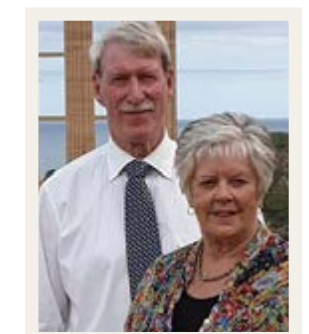
Martine Donnelly



Mirjam Sole



Faye James



Jonathan & Margaret Hooker

Mirjam Sole

Mirjam will be setting up a new support group for the North-East area of Hamilton. She and her husband have three teenage children and she is looking forward to working for GRG - an organisation she has a heart for. Mirjam set up the Waikato branch of Foster Hope and worked there for six years during which she got a real appreciation for the needs of the community and in particular grandparents raising grandchildren. Mirjam also comes to GRG with extensive experience as a facilitator and she is looking forward to drawing on this for the new group. Her leadership and design experience will be valuable and enhance the extensive skills of our greater SGC team.

Faye James

Faye has joined us as the new coordinator for Avondale/New Lynn. She is of Samoan, Cook Island and European descent. Faye has a Diploma in Early Childhood Education and is an active member of her church. She has children and grandchildren and is raising four grandchildren full time. GRG has been a great support to Faye and she is now wanting to give back to others in this role.

Jonathan and Margaret Hooker

Joining us as the new coordinators for Wairarapa are a couple who bring a wealth of experience to GRG. Jonathan has worked in the police, pastoral care as a church minister and as a local district councillor. He cares about people and the challenges they face and from his own experience raising grandchild knows grandparents raising their grandchildren fulltime have their fair share of these. Margaret has a background in nursing and rehabilitation. She brings her warm, caring and practical nature to this role. She also understands the concept of empowering people to do for themselves, by providing the necessary support to help them get there.

Resignations

We acknowledge and thank Karlene McCormick (Whakatane) Jan Miller (Central West Coast) and Ella Armstrong (Ruakaka/Whangarei) for their stella efforts supporting GRG members as Support Group Coordinators.

SGCs are often grandparents raising their grandchildren themselves and we very much appreciate the generous contribution that they give to GRG and members while they can. With a change in circumstances, Karlene, Jan and Ella are stepping down from their roles and we wish them and their whanau the very best for their future.

I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year ahead!



Merle Lambert
**National Support
Coordinator**

SALT - Caregiver Education

GRG's Simply Acquired & Learned Techniques™ (SALT) 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 and develop self-regulation and
- increase the child's feeling of stability, security, belonging, and resilience within their whānau.

REGISTER YOUR INTEREST FOR A SALT WORKSHOP IN 2023

Contact us at SALT@grg.org.nz or phone 0800 472 637

"This training has given me more tools to put into my kete. It has given me a better understanding of why my moko behaves the way she does, what triggers her..."

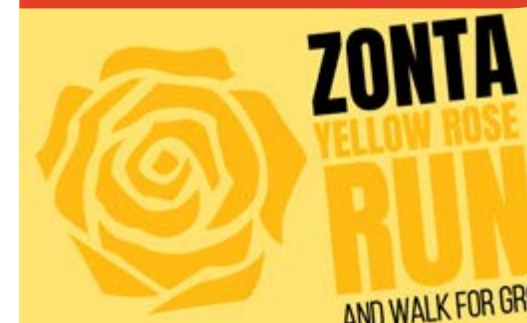
"Hugely rewarding - Helpful & easy to follow & Lisa made this informative fun and real learning.

It will help me with the tools I've learnt to become a better caregiver Auntie support person.

Basic honest real cool learning - was fun."

GRG Members in 2022

ZONTA UPDATE FROM KARLA



Canterbury Zonta Clubs and Hamilton Zonta Club - THANKYOU from GRG for your fantastic efforts on the Zonta Yellow Rose Run and Walk for GRG

On Sunday 16 October 2022, Zonta held its Yellow Rose Run and Walk for GRG to raise funds for our SALT caregiver education programme. Kate Bundle, GRG Chief Executive and I had the pleasure of taking part in this fantastic event with the Canterbury Zonta Clubs in gorgeous Hagley Park in Christchurch on a beautiful October spring morning. It was wonderful to experience the support of over 200 Zontians, supporters, family and friends including members of GRG. Thank you to all participants and the sponsors for your generous support for our walk and raising \$11,000 towards this vital learning programme for our members! It has been such a pleasure working with Zonta and we cannot thank you enough! Meri kirihimete me te Tau Hou ki a koutou katoa, Karla

