



*Wishing you and your family our very best wishes at Christmas—Meri Kirihimete!*

To all our member families and newsletter subscribers, on behalf of our GRG National Support Office team, the Board of Trustees and our volunteer Support Group Coordinators, we hope you all have a very happy Christmas and safe and enjoyable holiday period ahead with your whānau.

Our National Support Office will be **closed from 2pm on Wednesday 23 December and will re-open at 9am on 11 January 2020.**

2020 has been a challenging year. That is an understatement of course! In spite of a year to forget, we do look back with gratitude for all the support that has been there in the community. Funders from the philanthropic sector, private donors and Government Ministries have all ensured that in spite of the considerable difficulties that COVID-19 threw at everyone there has been fantastic support from them and we are deeply grateful for it so that we can continue to provide and further develop our support services and education programmes for grandparent and whānau care families nationwide.



Our team is looking forward to 2021 in what will also be a year that will mark our 20th Anniversary as a charitable trust serving our community! We look forward to celebrating 20 years with our amazing caregivers and their families across NZ in 2021. Until then, we hope you enjoy our GRG team's elf pics. We had a lot of fun using the [ElfYourself app](#) and for a bit of fun we have included some pics of our National Support Office Team as Santa's Elves in this mini-newsletter.

Until 2021, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all, Meri Kirihimete me ngā mihi o te tau hou ki a koutou katoa!

### **Reminder: UCB and OB Recipients**

If you are receiving the Unsupported Child or Ophan's benefit for a child or the children in your care, don't forget that you can apply for extra supports to help cover the costs of raising the children.

### **Extraordinary Care Fund**

You can apply for up to \$2,000 per child for a range of costs not covered within the weekly UCB/OB payments or other supports that may be available. See our [website](#) for guidelines. It has been confirmed by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) that the **cut-off date** for the **Extraordinary Care Fund** for February 2021 will be the **19th February 2021**

### **School and Year Start-Up Payment**

You can also get a **School and Year Start-Up Payment** for each child in your care. Apply mid-January to end of February. Payment will be made within 10 working days. See the table of current rates below.

Age of child (at end of February)	Payment
0 - 4 years	\$400
5 - 9 years	\$450
10 - 13 years	\$500
14 years and over	\$550

## Are you raising someone else's child?

If you are because there has been a breakdown in the child's family and you are likely to be their principal caregiver for at least 1 year from the date you apply to Work and Income for this support, then you are entitled to this support to help with the costs of raising the child.

The Unsupported Child Benefit is **not taxable and is 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 NZ.

To qualify for it you must also be over 18 years of age, resident and present in NZ for a continuous period of 12 months or more 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 on [Tricia@grg.org.nz](mailto:Tricia@grg.org.nz) or our helpline at the National Support Office on **0800 472 637** or on **09 418 3753** for a referral to our advocate, Tricia.



### 0800 GRANDS

Call us on our free helpline service for support, information, advice and referrals to our Outreach and Advocacy team.

0800 472 637 or 09 418 3753

Monday - Friday 9am to 2pm

**Our helpline service will be closed from 2pm on Wednesday 23 December 2020 and available from 9am on Monday 11 January 2021. For a full list of our Local Support Groups, please see our [website under the Local Support](#) tab. Our Facebook page is at [Facebook.com/grg.org.nz](https://Facebook.com/grg.org.nz)**

### Other Helpline Numbers to Keep Handy

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

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

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

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

**Text 1737 'Need to Talk?'** Get help from a counsellor

**0800 543 354 or Text 4357 for Lifeline** - 24/7 confidential support from qualified counsellors and trained volunteers

**0800 376 633 Youthline**, helping families and youth

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

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

**Depression.org.nz** – Free text number 4202

**Oranga Tamariki**—If you're worried about a child and want to make a referral or report of concern, call freephone: **0508 326 459** or email [contact@ot.govt.nz](mailto:contact@ot.govt.nz)

**VOYCE WHAKARONGO MAI**—the voice of children and youth in care, **0800 4VOYCE (0800 486 923)**

### Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ

[www.GRG.nz](http://www.GRG.nz)

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### Keeping it Current

Please let us know if there has been a change to your contact details. Our aim is to do the best we can for our members, but this becomes difficult if we are unable to keep you informed of what's happening. Letting us know if you've moved or had a change to your mobile phone or email is easy to do with the following options:

Visit our website [www.grg.org.nz](http://www.grg.org.nz) and click on the green **Update Your Member Details button** or [click here](#):

GRG.NZ



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