



Supporting and empowering grandparent and whānau care families since 2001



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

1pm on Wednesday 22 December and will re-open at 9am on Monday 10 January 2022



Kate Bundle
Chief Executive

Tena koutou katoa, nau mai haere mai ki ta matou panui whakamutunga o te tau 2021. Meri Kirihimete ki a koutou katoa!

Welcome and a Merry Christmas to you all. This is our last newsletter of 2021!

What a year—another year amid a pandemic by a name I don't wish to mention other than to acknowledge how tough it has been for our members and for everyone.

For our team at the GRG National Support Office, our crazy Christmas hat moment (below) was a moment to send our

Christmas goodwill and cheer to you all. Zoom has become a necessary tool and I confess it was very tempting to share some of the Zoom faces I usually see! Without doubt, we never want to replace the warmth and energy exchange experienced when working with a fantastic team of people, like I do, with the coldness of meeting via cyber space.

I look forward to a future when we are all in the same room again, just as I know so many of us can't wait to be able to hug our loved ones—separated, as we have been for months by the lockdowns and border restrictions.

Despite the circumstances and challenges thrown at us all this year, our wonderful team of staff and volunteers have worked very hard to support our families, and this month our Hamilton West Support Coordinator, Pat Davis shares his account of their group's Christmas Party and GRG's 20th birthday on page 4 which sounded like a lot of fun.

I also encourage you to take a moment to read our [2021 Performance Report \(2021PR\)](#) on our website (see link on the top of page 2 or click image at right of the front cover with member and SGC, Shirley Afoa, and her gorgeous grandson).

It has been phenomenal to see the support in the community for our



Thank you to all of our wonderful supporters in 2021. We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and we look forward to your support in 2022.



member families with well over 100 funders, donors and organisations listed on pages 34 and 35 of our PR2021, with many private individuals also supporting GRG through our Givealittle page, our website and through payroll giving. We cannot thank you enough for this support– it really has made an incredible difference in our ability to deliver much needed services and support over the past year.

Among those organisations, we acknowledge and thank the Zonta District 16 Clubs throughout New Zealand for their fundraising to support our SALT programme and its further development, and the many clubs who have provided direct

support to our Support Groups too.

On behalf of our Board of Trustees, National Support Office team and Support Coordinators, our thoughts and prayers are with you and your whānau this Christmas and holiday season. Keep safe and well. We look forward to seeing you in 2022!

Ko ta matou Poari Kaitiaki, ko te roopu Tautoko Motu me o matou Kairuruku Tautoko, ka tuku mihi me nga inoi mo koutou me o whānau i tenei Kirihimete. Kia kaha ke te pai. Ka kite tatou i a koe hei te tau 2022!— Kate Bundle

See: <https://www.grg.org.nz/Who+we+are/Annual+Report.html>



Tricia Advocating for You

Just a quick summary of the financial support payments available for caregivers receiving the **Unsupported Child** or **Orphan's Benefits** that are particularly relevant to be aware of at this time of the year.

Tricia Corin
Specialist
Advocate
Income &
Financial Support

Holiday and Birthday Allowance

This allowance is new! You will 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.

Each year, you get the:

- **Birthday Allowance** around two weeks before the child's birthday.
- **Holiday Allowance** around two weeks before 25 December.

is paid directly to the client's bank account. The child's age is their age on the last day of February in that year.

You must apply for this Payment which is done on the **Work & Income Website** on the **Online Form**.

The link is only put up between the Mid January and the End of February. The money is deposited into your Bank Account within 10 Days. We will have a link on our website and post information on our social media pages too so keep an eye out in from around the second week of January.

Child (years)	Amount (\$)
0—4	\$400
5—9	\$450
10—13	\$500
14 +	\$550

Extraordinary Care Fund

You can apply if a child you care for shows promise in a skill or talent, or because they are experiencing difficulties and need extra support. To qualify you need to get the Orphan's Benefit or Unsupported Child's Benefit. Between **1 July to 30 June each year** you can get **up to \$2,000** for each child you care for.

Age of the child	Weekly rate for Orphan's Benefit or Unsupported Child Benefit	Birthday and Holiday Allowance rate
Under 5 years old	\$203.03	\$101.52
5 to 9 years old	\$228.15	\$114.08
10 to 13 years old	\$246.93	\$123.47
14 years and over	\$265.62	\$132.81

If you apply before:	You will hear back from WINZ after:
18 February 2022	8 April 2022
8 July 2022	26 August 2022
14 October 2022	2 December 2022

School & Year Start Up Payment

The **School and Year Start-up Payment** provides non-taxable, non-recoverable financial assistance to assist with sundry school related costs or other costs relating to the care of the child.

The Caregiver must be receiving the **Orphans Benefit** or the **Unsupported child's Benefit**. This payment is available from Mid January to end of February each year.

The maximum amount of **School and Year Start-up Payment** will depend on the child's age as at the last day of February and



Hannah's Outreach



Hannah Morris
Community Outreach
Advocate

TOP TIPS FOR SURVIVING CHRISTMAS

It's that time of year again! And there is even more cause to celebrate because you survived another (sometimes brutal) year in lockdown! With Kids! Now more than ever it's natural to feel stress continue to build – whether this is because of financial pressure or just trying to keep everyone happy – there is no denying this time of year can lead to a lot of anxiety. That's why I wanted to quickly check in and give you all some... *Top tips to survive Christmas.*

1. Building up to the big day try and keep to your usual daily routine as much as possible – naps and bedtime in particular. Tired kids will make everything harder – trust me on this one!
2. Plan quiet time – this can look like reading a book, coloring in, watching a Christmas movie. This is also a time when you can prioritise your own self-care and do something for you!
3. Have a plan for the day and try to organise this as a family. Make a list of who needs to see who on the day and write up and all agree on a rough timetable for the day. This will hopefully take out any guess work.
4. Don't try to do everything yourself. If you are organising a big extended family lunch or dinner delegate tasks. Everyone enjoys a good potluck meal and this way you will enjoy the day (*and build up*) much more.
5. And lastly don't sweat the small stuff! The kids will be excited, things may get hectic and it's easy to feel overwhelmed but try to take moments to sit back and enjoy quality time together as a whanau creating life long memories.

Remember you are never alone. Although GRG will be closed throughout the Christmas period there are a great deal of services within NZ that will continue to operate throughout this time so reach out if you are in need.

**Merry Christmas everyone and here's to a great 2022.
See you all next year!**



Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ

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office@grg.org.nz	Birkenhead	Auckland 0746

A Message From Merle



Merle Lambert
National Support
Coordinator

Seasons Greetings to All

I have mixed blessings knowing that we are coming to the end of this year and entering the year for 2022.

We all had so much hope for 2021 – remember the cries of bring on 2021 following the Covid ridden year of 2020?

Sadly, it hasn't gone quite as we had hoped. COVID-19 stole the show yet again. Collectively, we are now appreciating that this pandemic has brought us a new world that ultimately, we are going to have to live with.

I have taken some lessons from all this. One is, that family/whānau is important! Precious in fact. The other is 'living in the moment'. Many of us are feeling that life is in limbo. It is difficult to make plans because we don't know whether these will quickly be disrupted. But 'living in the moment' is not a bad thing. It gives us the ability to appreciate what we have, be thankful for it and to make the most of it's potential.

So, while it is easy to be angry and bitter at what life throws at us, we have a choice. We can let these feelings overwhelm us and continue to cause havoc in our lives and those around us, or we can be kind to ourselves and others knowing that much of what is happening around us is out of our control, make the most of each day and be the best we can be.

"Yesterday has gone, tomorrow awaits, let today be your gift of choice this Christmas".

Life is not a race-but indeed a journey.
Be honest. Work hard. Be choosy. Say "thank you". "I love you", and "great job" to someone each day. Take time for prayer. Be thankful. Love your life and what you've been given, it is not accidental. Search for your purpose and do it as best you can. Dreaming does matter. It allows you to become that which you aspire to be. Laugh often. Appreciate the little things in life and enjoy them. Some of the best things really are free. Do not worry. Forgive, it frees the soul. Take time for yourself. Plan for longevity. Recognize the special people you've been blessed to know. Live for today, live for the moment.
~Bonnie Mohr.



Christmas in the Park—Hamilton West



In Celebration of GRG's 20th Birthday!

So, the weather was kind to us having rained constantly for the 2 days leading up to the event. Invitations and responses had been arranged and all provisions were made to ensure a safe MOH compliant event for those attending. Santa was a hit and the Lolly scramble was a bonus, even if we had to rush off and get the Lollies.

My Hamilton West team of Tania and Martine and Easts team of Maria and Terrie-Marie along with 6 volunteers from Sunrise Rotary made the day very easy. The Spit Roast catering banquet was perfect and the gifts offered from Kids in Need for each child had been carefully wrapped. One of our members had delivered hand restored dolls as an offer to those little girls attending.

I am hopeful we will be able to repeat this event next year with the help and thanks to Sunrise Rotary Hamilton for their donated contributions to this event, and people power, and for the 20y ear celebration of GRG Trust's contribution.

What a day 72 fed and 40 kids had a gift. Merry Christmas and happy holidays and kia kaha - Pat Davis



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 1pm on Wednesday 22 December 2021 and available from 9am on Monday 10 January 2022. 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://www.facebook.com/grg.org.nz)

Other Handy Helpline Numbers to keep handy

Meri Kirihimete!

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

Food Banks— www.foodbank.co.nz

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 and click on the green **Update Your Member Details** button or [click here](#):

