



NEWSLETTER JULY 2018

DATABASE: 7835 WHANAU CARERS

Tena Koutou, Talofa Lava, Kia Orana, Fakaalofa Lahi Atu, Malo e Lelei, Bula Vinaka, Taloha Ni, Kam Na Mauri, Greetings to all!



GRG's New National Support Office—Official Opening (see p2)

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Carers Pay it Forward (PIF) pages (New)

Recently there was a call from members on our GRG face book page wanting free pay it forward pages set up just for carers. The idea being that they could either gift things (paying it forward) or put the call out to others who may be able to help where things were needed.

The call went out and several our members have offered to be admin for these pages.

We thank these wonderful people below who have offered to administer these pages.

Please note that these pages are independent of the GRG Trust NZ.

If you wish to take part in the Carers PIF pages, please read the rules and disclaimers.

We will update you on our face book page www.facebook.com/grg.org.nz/ of any further Carers PIF pages too.

Happy gifting and receiving folks.

- East Coast Bays Auckland: www.facebook.com/groups/259910651252686/
- Albany/Hibiscus Coast Auckland: www.facebook.com/groups/1688475094569128/
- North Shore Auckland: www.facebook.com/groups/carersNorthShoregroup/about/
- Franklin Auckland: www.facebook.com/groups/2228653834029134/
- Thames: www.facebook.com/groups/202761063695041/
- Hamilton: www.facebook.com/groups/CarersPIFHamilton/about/
- Rotorua: www.facebook.com/groups/226602447937157/about/
- Fielding: www.facebook.com/groups/204235706878084/
- Nelson: www.facebook.com/groups/CarersPIFNelson/about/
- West Coast South Island: www.facebook.com/groups/854960674692483/
- Christchurch: www.facebook.com/groups/599019020482995/about/
- Dunedin: www.facebook.com/groups/255465778533488/about/



Kate's Take...
From the CEO's Desk this Month

GRG's new National Support Office Opening

Coinciding with the 1 July 2018 implementation of the long-awaited clothing allowance for children being supported by the Unsupported Child or Orphan's Benefit; we celebrated the official opening of our new National Support Office premises at the Chelsea Business Park in Mokoia Road in Birkenhead, Auckland.



At this milestone celebration in which local kaumatua, Beau Panapa performed the karakia to bless our new office, we were delighted to have the Minister for Children, the Honourable Tracey Martin officially open our new National Support office, particularly as it was her private members bill that brought about the new clothing allowance for so many of our families.



It was a testament to the reputation of the Trust and our founder, Diane Vivian QSO and our support for grandparent and whanau care families nationwide over the best part of two decades, that so many representatives of local and central government from across the political spectrum, funders, stakeholders and other community

organisations also made the effort to come along and celebrate with us.



L-R: Bruce Hopkins, Alfred Ngaro MP, Diane Vivian QSO, Kate Bundle (CEO, GRG), Hon. Paula Bennett MP, Hon Tracey Martin (Minister for Children)

We also appointed Lord of the Rings actor **Bruce Hopkins** as an **Honorary Life Member of the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ** in recognition of his incredible journey from October 2017 to May 2018 walking the Te Araroa Trail from Cape Reinga to Bluff as an ambassador raising funds and awareness of the plight of grandparent and other whanau carers. Through his campaign over \$30,000 has been raised for the Trust to date. Thank you Bruce!



In addition to providing space for new Support Services staff, our new National Support Office premises also provide space for workshops and training and for the donated essentials we send out to families in need and a space where the local members have their support group meetings each month.



L-R: Members of the GRG team: Jocelyn Bray and Judith McKay (GRG Trustees), Dana Youngman (National Support Office Administrator), Lisa Braid (Operations Manager), Jo-Anne Thomas (GRG Chair), Kate Bundle (CEO), Diane Vivian QSO (Founding Trustee, Kelly Vivian (former GRG Administrator) & Sharon Richardson (GRG Trustee)



I've been thinking...

Diane Vivian, Founding Trustee

At certain times in our lives we take time out to reflect. After 12 years of raising two they have now well reached independence. Making their own way in the world. I look at both and still, to a certain degree see the effects of early childhood abuse, but only a little. One works only part times as that is all she can manage, due to anxiety in being around people. The second and most difficult of the children who took us to the wall and back, the one which had us walking on egg shells, finally has found her passion and is in her second year of studying to become an early childhood teacher. She still has her wobbles and usually when the moon is on the ascent-full then into descent. This is when awful messages get sent our way. We have learnt to ignore them, because if one responds one gets an essay message back to up the ante.

Many of you have had your charges go on to do some wondrous things in their lives, so there is always hope and you can sleep straight in your bed, so to speak. One can only imagine what their lives would have been like for them if you had not stepped up to the plate. So well done you! You who have walked this path or are still walking this path. There is light at the end of that tunnel. Sadly, for some the damage is too great, but we must take heart and hope that the goodness you have put into their lives will steer them through troubled waters.

This leads me on to other thoughts, it is very fair to say that the calls we get and have gotten, over the past couple of years (95% of the thousands) we get P/Methamphetamine is involved somewhere. Being a big picture thinker, I do worry who will be the grandparents of the future? Certainly not the parents of the children who have been uplifted and raised by another. What will become of those children? Yes, we do know some great-grandparents are raising, but honestly ask yourself would you, being a 'great grandparent' wish to do this again after raising the grandchildren? To begin all over again and being much older. Some do and I applaud them. So therefore, what

becomes of these children?

I see the calls as I am sure you do for more Foster parents in social media and the media. The demand is not being met now, so one can imagine the future. Does the net (whānau) via Aunts/Uncles/Older siblings need to be spread wider. Is it time a register was kept for wider family members to add their names and contacts also, if willing to take in a whānau child? And where none can be found suitable do we need to open wrap around centres/ loving homes/communities, where there are house mothers, counsellors, sport coaches and others who provide that 'family' environment.

When one looks at the numbers of children under the care of Oranga Tamariki, stranger/ friend care and in grandparent/whānau care, it is frightening. One really does not know total numbers and it will only get worse as time goes on. It is increasing now year by year as stats show. Or does there need to be developed through Unitec, caregiver courses, conducive to also raising (re timing), in greater numbers where carers can get accredited and then be paid? This could effectively take a large number of people off Jobseekers. Swings and round a bout's. Now I know GRG and Fostering Kids offer these but to limited numbers (max 10). I am talking big numbers and ongoing with different subjects that caregivers will face. Maybe also by home-based courses via the internet for those rurally isolated or struggling with transport or special needs children.

Potentially a solution, if we are really serious about the wellbeing of our taonga. Some serious consideration needs to be thought through and actions begun for our future children who are going to need to be removed and find a forever family.

I wish in my heart of hearts this was not the case but sadly there is no point in burying one's head in the sand, and no point in closing the gate after the horse has bolted! We need to give this serious issue some thought and plan now, the future fast approaches.

Five Mindset Shifts Grandfamilies Need to Make

Grandparents raising grandchildren need to make key shifts in their thinking.

[Andrew Adesman M.D.](#)
[Building Strong Families](#)

When you find yourself raising your grandchild, as about 3.5 million people in North America currently are, you need to make several changes to your basic mindset in order to handle such a new situation. At least, that's what I hear from the grandparents who bring their youngsters to me for pediatric care. It's not always easy to make these adjustments, they tell me. They discover they need to revise their roles, their expectations, and perhaps even some of their relationships—they need to embrace real paradigm shifts. But little by little, the whole grandfamily adapts to a new normal, one that is ultimately full of joy. Let's look at five of the common transitions grandparents usually need to make.

1. Say goodbye to the “spoiling grandparent” role: Now you're a parent again. Many grandparents lament the loss of the role of the indulgent fun-lover who spoils the grandchildren and then sends them back home to their parents. But the reality is that when you're raising your grandchild, you need to act as a parent. If you've been a typical treat-bestowing grandparent before, now you must default to the stricter [parenting](#) role because children need an adult in charge. So if, as a grandparent, you might have allowed a brownie before lunchtime, now your job is to think first about whether a pediatrician (or dentist) would approve, and just say no to the child. Your mantra is healthy food first, dessert second. The same goes for any daily activity that requires limits and structure: homework, bedtime, time spent with electronic devices. Grandparents who are in and out of their grandchildren's lives don't have to worry about these choices. But now, acting as a parent, you're helping shape the habits and values of a lifetime. The stakes are higher!

2. Put your grandchild's needs ahead of those of the birth parent. If the birth parent—often your adult child—is still in the picture, that person may ask for your help: time, money, a place to live, or other resources. Yet sometimes those requests may conflict with what your grandchild needs or wants. (Let alone the issues of possibly enabling any dysfunctional behavior.) So you make the paradigm shift and put the grandchild first—even if the adult child's request may be legitimate. For example, your adult daughter asks for a

lift to the mall: her ride just fell through. But you have plans— you're taking your grandson to his good buddy's birthday party. Who should have priority? Your grandchild. Assuming you are unable to do both, you take him to the party.

3. Shift to more of a listening and learning role with the younger parents you meet. Consider developing a new attitude towards the parents of your grandchildren's friends, who—despite the likely age difference—are now your peers in terms of parenting. They may be twenty or thirty years younger than you are, but you're all parenting the same generation. Younger parents have a lot to share: give them a chance! Rather than talking to them about the good old days—before they were born—you listen and learn from their much more current experiences with school issues, media and tech, where to find the best bargains on toys and clothes, and other topics. In addition, when you discover something useful, you share it with them, whether it's about local school board [politics](#) or a citywide event they might like to attend.

4. Accept that some older friends may stop calling. Before your grandchild came to live with you, maybe you socialized widely with friends: eating out, going to movies, [sports](#) events, fitness classes, or other adult-centered activities. Now that you are a grandfamily, you may need to shift from an active [social life](#) with other adults to family-oriented routines: parent-teacher conferences and other school events, or outdoor play and kids' sports, to name just a few. Your friends may tell you they've already “been there, done that,” and they're not interested in having children tag along. It happens. It's not their fault, and it's not your fault.

Keep in mind that many other grandparents are also raising their grandchildren, and you may develop new friendships with those same-age peers. You may meet them at support groups, through social media sites, parent-teacher meetings, or when you're out and about. You may also find that some of your former friends are also parenting their grandchildren, and you may reconnect because of these common bonds.

5. Realize that your retirement will likely be different from what you anticipated. I've met parenting grandparents in their forties, in their seventies, and everywhere in between. Some older grandparents have lamented to me that they had special plans for their retirement, whether traveling, pursuing hobbies, or just relaxing and doing whatever the heck they wanted to do. When you're raising a grandchild, you may need to postpone or altogether give up on some of your former retirement plans. And yes, there will be moments when

Grand's reflections...

Life in the fast lane

An example of when you're getting it right but it still bites you in the rear! So, we are at A@E with our now 9 yr old autistic grandson waiting for an X-ray.

The doctor decides that he will give him some anti-inflammatory pain relief before the X-rays to help with the pain. He tries to explain to him that he will need a glass of water with them as they may affect his stomach (and we all know how). 9 yr old is still very wary of most strangers including doctors so won't touch the water.

I explain very plainly that without the water he may end up with 'runny Poo's' and make his tummy sick. His face was priceless and his eyes wide, as he turned very embarrassed to the doctor and says 'I'm sorry!' Then turns to me, stares me right in the face, rolls his eyes and says "Oma, inappropriate!" (I know where he got that word from). It took me all my time not to laugh out loud!

A Journey indeed

Here I sit enjoying a beautiful sunny day taking some time reflecting back over the past 20 plus years of raising grandchildren.

Thinking back over time I never thought to far into the future. Hubby and I took every day as it come.

The good times and not so good times. The hours spent with Lawyers, Social Workers and the never ending court hearings.

But I smile today. We made it the fight was worth it.

No more babies holding onto my apron strings, no more nappies, doctor visits and how can I ever forget - Kindergarten and school.

Back then I thought I was the only grand up early getting our babes ready for kindie. Who else would be on a kindergarten committee for that many years.

I remember our first meeting with Di and the small group of concerned grandparents and people who found themselves, raising their tamariki and back out there hunting down the cots, beds, clothes and so much more. How can I ever forget all those muddy rugby jerseys and boots. Saturday afternoons with a hose and scrubbing brush in hand.

But joy came when I would watch each one take that walk on the school stage collecting their certificates, wow I was so proud of them.

Today my heartfelt thanks goes out to GRG. You walked the journey with us, you listened while we cried and laughed. You made us strong. Today I am blessed to have so many wonderful moko, grand moko and not forgetting the great grand moko.

Sadly 13 years ago I found myself battling my biggest battle with the sudden loss of my dear hubby, sitting alone with 5 moko. Sad, hard times but with all the aroha we received we continued on our journey.

My moko have travelled far and near and have great ambitions in life.

Today I watch with pride as our 26 year old grand finally completes her Bachelors in Social Practice with the dream of helping others get through the hard times.

My message to all don't try to hide behind closed doors. Reach out, talk get advice big or small. Like me the day will come when you can sit back and smile. It is so cool being a nana that watches while the next generation become parents and grandparents. My ears are always open and advice is free. But I no longer need to change the nappies or have the car seats in the back of my car. I am free, I am me and I am proud of the journey we took together.

God Bless one and all.



Great-Grand writes:

You know you are getting old when you would rather drive around the block then sit in long lines of congested morning traffic at an uncontrolled intersection in order to drop off your child at the school at the end of your street.

Horried or Proud?

Nephew we are raising aged 6 asked me what is a humanitarian (he was watching something on TV), before I could answer brother aged 7 says, 'I know, it's like a vegetarian only they eat humans. I nearly choked on my coffee.



News from Variety Club

Our Winter Appeal has now launched and we have had over 100 new sponsors sign up already this week. This means that our waiting list continues to get shorter so now is the time to apply!

If you know of any families who could benefit from Kiwi Kid Sponsorship get their applications into us ASAP.

We are working with the NZ Herald to create awareness about the challenges families face during winter and drum up support which is fantastic. We are expecting many more sponsors to come on board because of this during the next few weeks.

Kiwi Kid Sponsorship matches financially disadvantaged kids with a sponsor to provide funding each year for basic essentials such as clothing, bedding, shoes and school related costs so if you know of any children who are getting cold heading into winter now is the time to apply.

To [apply online or download an application form click here](#). If you have any questions about our criteria or the application process, please feel free to call me on 09 522 3742.

Kind regards,

Cushla

Cushla McKenzie-Higgott

Variety - the Children's Charity

P: 09 522 3742

E: cushla@variety.org.nz

www.variety.org.nz/apply-for-funding/



WARNING to all

Immediately!! Stop feeding your kids Rice Bubbles. It is not absorbed in your body in a healthy manner. It is stored in your body and the effects become visible when you are older. I used to eat Rice Bubbles as a kid and now that I am older I can testify to the effects of this.

Every morning when I wake up and get out of bed, everything in my body snaps, crackles and pops.

Pass this message on to everyone, to stop this from happening in their old age.



Give a little to GRG via our secure DPS payment system on our website at www.grg.org.nz or at <https://www.givealittle.co.nz/org/grg>



Thank you for your support for GRG!

Can we help you?

Members ONLY services are available nationwide
Caregivers Toll free helpline
0800 GRANDS (0800 472 637)
For landline caregivers only

Or

TEXT 4 SUPPORT
TEXT your name to 027 398 0388
We will call you back.

New members and general information please call
0800 472 637 or 09 418 3753
or join via our [website at www.grg.org.nz](http://www.grg.org.nz)

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If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter or you have changed address please update your details by contacting the GRG Trust Office as this is where the total mail out membership is kept.
Moved home or planning to? Be sure to let us know.

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.

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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
We are respectful, we listen, we learn
He rōpū manaaki, he rōpū whakarongo, he rōpū ako mātou

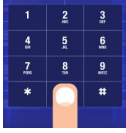
Please pass this on to other grandparents/kin carers you know.
GRG Trust Head Office hours are 9am – 2pm daily. (We raise grandchildren too)
We are a Charitable Trust

www.grg.org.nz



Thank you to our Community Partner— Suncorp and to our generous Sponsors, Funders and private donors supporting GRG's Support Services, Information Resources and Carer Education programmes throughout New Zealand, including this newsletter.





SUPPORT GROUP CONTACT NUMBERS

For the most up to date contact details please go to our website www.grg.org.nz. If you are a grandparent or whanau caregiver and need a referral to one of our Field Officers please call 0800 GRANDS (0800 472 637) or if you are in Auckland please call 09 4183753 * Telephone Support ** Telephone Support and Meetings

Kaitia* / Kerikeri	Martha Taonui	022 050 7056	jamcleaner@gmail.com
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Papamoa/Mt Maunganui*	Rawinia Macredie	07 562 2850	jnmacredie@kinect.co.nz
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