



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 **5600+** member families and all our non-member subscribers!

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.

Raising resilient and healthy children and young people through empowering grandparent and whānau care families since 2001

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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, they are missing, or they have a long-term disablement and you are likely 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 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 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 Corin.

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



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Keeping it Current

Our aim is to keep you informed and of what's happening, key information and opportunities that can help you. Letting us know if you've moved or had a change to your mobile phone or email is easy.

Click on the green **Update Your Member Details** button or visit our website www.grg.org.nz and click on the green button there.

Or email us at office@grg.org.nz
Or call us on 0800 472 637



[Facebook.com/grg.org.nz](https://www.facebook.com/grg.org.nz)

Update Your
Member Details



Kate's Take

Kate Bundle
Chief Executive

Welcome to our first Pānui for 2022 and a very special welcome to the 131 new member families who have joined GRG for support since Christmas!

For many of our members with school-aged children (and of course with rangatahi heading off to tertiary study, jobs and further training) the start of the year is always a challenge and can be a very stressful time settling into routines again, not to mention the stress of school uniforms, school costs and having to get out those lunchboxes again and figure out what to put in them that will be eaten, not left to mould and rot in the bottom of the bag! But let's be honest. This time and this year, it is not just the adjustment

to new routines after enjoying a summer break that is causing an increase in anxiety and stress for so many of us today.

Two years and counting, responding to the pandemic and the anxiety associated with Government directions and mandates, personal decisions about vaccines, along with the impact of losing jobs, income, homes, businesses and health and our normal way of life... It is all a potent source of overwhelming stress for many individuals and families right across our nation. I confess I too have experienced this overwhelming anxiety, fear, and uncertainty as to when, if ever, our lives can return to a semblance of the lives we once enjoyed. Certainly, the ever-present fear of catching a virus has occupied too much space in our psyche to date!

But it is the mental health and wellbeing of our children and youth that has really shaken me. Truly shocking statistics were released this month about the incidence of self harming amongst our children and youth. Over the past year to September 2021, *"children and young people were taken to hospital after self-harming more than 5600 times...escalating an alarming trend that mental health experts say is indicative of growing distress among young New Zealanders."*¹

Disturbingly this statistic was an increase by over 32% compared to the previous year, and for every young person that is hospitalised from self-harming, there are untold more who are self-harming in secret or who haven't needed hospitalisation. My own teenage daughter confided in me recently how disturbed she was by the self-harming and "cutting" that some of the girls in her year and friend group have indulged in. Self-harming amongst teens is as widespread as it is insidious. It is also a behaviour that some young people try because they feel pressure to try it because others are doing it.

Parents and caregivers be warned and be educated because there is the further challenge of a significant shortage of resources and professional supports available in our mental health system, which is currently unable to meet the growing demand for help.

There is no doubt that the pandemic has exacerbated the levels of mental stress and mental illness in our society, but as the Koi Tū, Centre for Informed Studies, 2020 *"Youth Mental Health in Aotearoa New Zealand: Greater Urgency Required"* report² noted; the rise in distress amongst youth has become a "silent pandemic" in our society. While it has become worse, it is not new. Looking through our old newsletters recently, I came across an insightful article that was published in our [March 2014 newsletter](#). At that time it included the telling introductory note; *"(Not a pleasant subject but something we must be aware of) we are repeating this January 08 article again due to an increase in calls about this."* The article and more information can also be found at <https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/cutting.html>

If you are struggling with this issue or supporting someone through this, I highly recommend reading the above article as an excellent starting point to understanding self-harming.

In this month's Pānui, Hannah expands on her [November 2021 article on the Polyvagal theory](#)— sharing some simple exercises that we can use at any time of the day to help shift some of the stress and anxiety in our bodies.

I tried them and it works. Although I struggled to get off the floor and was reminded of the state of my lower back with a disc that is well and truly stuffed! Spinal fusion surgery is booked for next week after too many years of enduring unrelenting pain, but that is another story. I encourage you all to try the exercises and to share them with the tamariki and rangatahi in your care as another strategy they can use to calm their body's vagus nerve, when they too, feel anxious and overwhelmed.

Merle's update includes farewells and welcomes and it is with much sadness, but appreciation that we farewell Kay Higgins (Te Kuiti) and Robyn Robertson (New Lynn) from their Support Coordinator roles. On behalf of us all, thank you for your wonderful service and support for our members over the years and our very best wishes for your next endeavours.

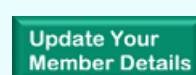
1. [NZ Herald article](#), 19 February 2022

2. <https://informedfutures.org/wp-content/uploads/Youth-Mental-Health-in-Aotearoa-NZ.pdf>

Keep 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:



Caregiver Education



'SALT' (Simply Acquired and Learned Techniques™) Training Programme

Gain practical insight and understanding of the impact of past trauma on a child or young person and learn to effectively manage and parent a child who may be exhibiting troubling or challenging behavior.

"Such a worthwhile programme, with lots of useful strategies. I had 4 sessions with a child psychologist who was not able to give me anything like what I got from SALT".

Register your interest!

Please note: We are currently planning our SALT workshop programme and schedule to commence again from April 2022. If you are interested in attending a **SALT Workshop** please email us at SALT@grg.org.nz or call us on **0800 472 637**

Triple P Parenting now with FREE ONLINE options!

Triple P is giving New Zealand whānau [families] free access to practical and easy-to-use resources for **building children's emotional resilience throughout the pandemic and beyond**, thanks to funding from the Ministry of Health and support from Whāraurau as part of the COVID-19 response. Included in the options is the latest Fear-Less Triple P Online - a program specifically designed to help children and young people get on top of anxiety.



Triple P Parenting in person training is also available in: Waitematā, Counties Manukau, Bay of Plenty and Mid-Central District Health Board Regions; with a range of courses and sessions to help make life easier – and happier – for families.

Find the help that suits you best; *Small group sessions for practical targeted solutions, Private, quick and one-on-one meetings with a Triple P provider, Online courses to get all the Triple P strategies, Or with a specific focus on helping your child learn to manage and reduce anxious feelings.*

For more information go to: www.triplep-parenting.net.nz



Caring Families
AOTEAROA

Training

www.caringfamilies.org.nz

Training Calendar: <https://myols.net/caringfamilies/calendar>

Regions; Upper North, Auckland, Auckland South/Waikato, Central North, North West, East Coast, Lower North, Lower South, Upper South, Canterbury

The training and support CFA offer is for individuals who parent tamariki and rangatahi not born to them. It focuses on relationship difficulties children in care may experience including insecure attachments, trauma, loss, family violence, and/or separation. In our training, we pay special attention to the parenting attitude of PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, and Empathy), and we give caregivers the ability to understand, without judging, the internal experience of the tamariki. The emphasis is on maintaining connection with the tamariki and rangatahi while also providing structure, supervision, and discipline to support behaviour.

CFA's framework of practice is healing centred and trauma informed, and utilises the relational/attachment model. This framework is informed by Dyadic Developmental Practice (DDP), developed by Dan Hughes (2009, 2011).

CFA deliver a range of online and face-to-face trainings during the school term during the day, in the evening, and on the weekend.

All caregivers who receive their allowance from Oranga Tamariki, Work and Income, or do not receive a care allowance, are funded by Oranga Tamariki to attend trainings. All you need to do is register for the training – it is free. If you are a caregiver through another care agency, you are still able to access our training. Please discuss your training needs with your agency, as they will need to pay for your attendance. We welcome working in partnership with other agencies to meet the needs of their caregivers.

Your My Vaccine Pass is required to attend face-to-face trainings in accordance with New Zealand's Covid-19 Protection Framework.



Hannah's Outreach

Polyvagal Exercises

How to release the trauma that is stored in the body

Breathing exercises are a powerful component of Polyvagal- Informed therapy. A particular form of this involves slow, deep breathing from your diaphragm. Emphasize a longer exhalation. Research shows that this kind of breathing — for even just two minutes — will engage the vagus nerve and recalibrate your responses.

Hannah Morris
Community Outreach
Advocate

Before Christmas in our newsletter, I discussed Polyvagal theory with you all – remember this is the theory in how our body responds to stress and trauma and how this is stored in the body. Polyvagal theory is centered around the Vagus nerve – which is a very long nerve that wanders through the body responding to stress in our bodies. Simply there are three different states of stress— social engagement (our happy place), sympathetic activation (stress and anxiety) and lastly shutdown, immobilization (freeze, lethargy).

It is important to note that the body simply cannot withstand being in a sympathetic state constantly however unrelenting living in our modern day world is. So, it is important to understand how to relieve this. Trauma stored in your body is not so much about what happened to you, but more about how your nervous system integrated the experience. Which is why resetting your nervous system is the fastest and most effective way to relieve stress and anxiety. Today I am going to explain a **very simple exercise to reset the vagus nerve for less pain, stress and tension.**

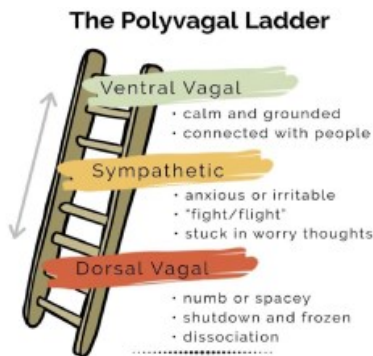
Firstly, in a seated position start with just turning your head from side to side and notice if it is easier to turn one direction than the other – this will be your baseline and we will come back to this later. Now go ahead and lie on your back, as it is best to complete this exercise lying down – particularly the first few times you do it.

Lying on your back, interlace your fingers and place your hands behind your head, cradling your skull in your fingers. All you are going to do is move your eyes to one side while keeping your head in the centre. Remember you need your nose to point straight up to the ceiling and use your hands as an anchor to ensure that you are not turning it. Remain here for approximately 30 seconds and then allow your vision to return to normal.

While you are doing this you will hopefully notice your breathing naturally deepen or have the urge to swallow – these are vagus nerve responses and this is a fantastic signal that something is shifting in your nervous system. This is exactly what we want! Also, it is important to note that you can absolutely hold this eye position for longer, 30 seconds is just the absolute minimum. So, if you do not notice a sigh, swallow, or yawn in that period, you can hold it for longer.

Now shift your vision to the other side and practice the same motion as explained earlier. Remain there for a further 30 seconds and then finally come back to a seated position. It is now time to re-check your mobility by turning your head side to side and notice are you moving with more ease and tension? Has there been some relief of tension? What have you noticed is different in your mobility?

Hopefully if you have completed the exercise correctly you will have noticed an increase in mobility and a decrease in tension in this area. This is a very tangible way to show you that there has been a shift within your vagus nerve! How neat is that!



Now that you are engaged let us look quickly into anxiety and go through a quick exercise that will also help with this. Anxiety is a nervous system state and under normal circumstances it is essential to protect you from dangers and ensure your survival. However, for many people, and particularly those who have experienced trauma, anxiety can become totally overwhelming even when you are completely safe.

So here is an exercise to help reprogram the brain and relieve your anxiety.

Sit in a comfortable position, either on the floor or chair. Bring your right hand to the top of your head and tip your right ear towards your right shoulder, keep your head in this position and shift your eyes only towards the left side of your vision. Hold for 30 seconds – again notice any of those vagus nerve responses that we discussed earlier. Return to normal then repeat this on the other side.

This is so simple, yet effective and helps us to break up tension and shift out of an activated state to a more calm and present state. There are many more simple exercises such as these that help us to reset the vagus nerve, so if you find that this is something that works for you, and you would like to know more, please contact us at National Support Office to discuss more, and continue shifting the trauma stored in your body. Anxiety is a normal part of our stress response, but it is important for our overall health and well-being not to get stuck there.



Tricia Advocating for You

Income of a Child and Student Allowance

There is often a lot of confusion around the effects on the Unsupported Child's Benefit/ Orphans Benefit when it comes to a child's personal earnings. This month we look at the income a child may receive, including income that is not from personal earnings, when a child leaves school, and is aged 18 or older, leaves school during the academic year and/ or leaves at the end of the school year, and where a child receives a Student Allowance or Student Loan. We also provide information on Caregivers, Legal Guardians and Permanent Caregivers.

Tricia Corin
Specialist Advocate
Income/Financial Support

Income of a Child Effects on the Unsupported Child's Benefit/ Orphans Benefit (UCB/OB)

- ◆ Personal earnings of the child do not affect the rate of payment of **Unsupported Child Benefit** or **Orphans Benefit**
- ◆ A child in Full Time Employment and who is Financially Independent is not considered a Dependent child and is not entitled to the **Unsupported Childs Benefit** or **Orphans Benefit** .

Note: a child is still considered a dependent child if they are working full-time during the school holidays and they will be returning to school after the holidays.

- ◆ Part-time employment does not make a child financially independent.

Other Income

A child may receive other income that is not from personal earnings. Any other money received (other than personal earnings) that is more than 50% of the basic annual benefit rate reduces the benefit payable by \$1.00 for every complete \$1.00 of income.

Other income may include:

- ◆ interest from bank accounts
- ◆ trust income and
- ◆ payments from the **Arthur Hall Fletcher Trust**



Child Leaves School

When a child leaves School or an education facility then the **Unsupported Childs Benefit** or **Orphans Benefit** can continue to be paid if the child remains a dependent child.

Child aged 18 or older leaves School during the Academic year

Where a child aged 18 years or older leaves school or an educational facility during the academic year, the **Unsupported Child Benefit** or **Orphan's Benefit** should stop from the beginning of the next pay period in which the child leaves school or an educational facility.

Child aged 18 years or older at the end of the School Year

Unsupported Child Benefit or **Orphan's Benefit** can continue to be paid up to and including the first payday in January.

Where the child applies for a benefit in their own right (prior to the first payday in January) the benefit stops from:

- ◆ the date the child's own benefit is granted or
- ◆ the first pay day in January following

Child receives a Student Allowance

Where a child receives Student Allowance or an Independent Circumstances Allowance under the Student Allowances Regulations 1998 they are no longer a **dependent child** and the **Unsupported Child Benefit** or **Orphan's Benefit** must generally stop from:

- ◆ the beginning of the next pay period in which the event took place or
- ◆ the date the child's Student Allowance is granted (whichever is the earlier).

Child receives a Student Loan

Receiving a Student Loan (including the living cost component) does not mean the child is financially independent.

Provided the child continues to be the caregiver's primary responsibility and maintained as a member of their family and financially dependent (that is, the caregiver is meeting some of the costs for the child) the **Unsupported Childs Benefit** or **Orphans Benefit** can continue to be paid:

- ◆ up until they turn 18 years or
- ◆ where the child is continuing school or is attending a tertiary education establishment, up to the end of the school year in which they turn 18

Student Allowance

The Student Allowances Scheme provides targeted financial assistance, in the form of grants (Student Allowances), to assist New Zealanders who undertake secondary and tertiary education.

Student Allowances are designed to assist students with their living costs while they study.

Eligible students must generally be undertaking full-time study, and they must be enrolled in a recognised course of study or programme at an approved education provider.

Together with the **Student Loan Scheme**, **Student Allowances** are the main components of the Student Support system that provides funding directly to students. The government funds education providers through the Tertiary Education Commission.

Students getting a **Student Allowance** are not dependent children for the purposes of; **Child Support, family tax credits, and both the Orphans Benefit and the Unsupported Childs Benefit.**

Eligibility

To be eligible for a **Student Allowance** a student must make an application and meet the following eligibility criteria:

- ◆ be aged 18 (*some exceptions apply for 16 and 17 year olds*) and less than 65 years of age at study start date and
- ◆ be a New Zealand citizen or entitled to reside indefinitely in New Zealand and
- ◆ be studying a recognised programme either full-time or (*with our approval*) limited full-time at an approved tertiary provider or secondary school and
- ◆ not be getting a benefit, New Zealand Superannuation, Veterans Pension or a youth payment and
- ◆ not be getting similar government study assistance without our approval

If a student meets these eligibility requirements they are also assessed to establish their entitlement to an allowance.

Note: a client is not eligible for **Student Allowance** when they or their partner are getting the full-time rate of the COVID-19 Income Relief Payment. They can choose to reduce the Income Relief Payment to the part-time rate to be eligible for a **Student Allowance**.

Entitlement

To be entitled to a **Student Allowance**, a student must meet the following entitlement criteria:

- ◆ a parental income assessment (*if under 24*) and
- ◆ a personal income assessment or
- ◆ a combined income assessment (*if in a recognised relationship*)

Definition of a Parent

The definition of a student's parent for the **Student Allowance** parental income test includes:

- ◆ a natural or adoptive parent
- ◆ a step-parent - a person who is married to, in a civil union or, a de facto relationship with, the student's parent
- ◆ any person acting in place of a parent of the student

A parent does not include a caregiver or legal guardian, or their partner, who is:

- ◆ receiving or has received a Foster Care Allowance, Orphan's Benefit or Unsupported Child's Benefit for the student
- ◆ providing or has provided a transition support living arrangement for the student under section 386AAD of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989

A transition support living arrangement is where a young person stays or returns to living with a caregiver up to the age of 21.

Caregivers and Legal Guardians

The term caregiver covers a range of caring arrangements from emergency and respite care through to permanent care. A caregiver can be a person with or without legal orders for the child, such as guardianship orders or parenting orders.

A legal guardian is a natural parent (*a natural guardian*), a person appointed as a guardian by the Family Court (*a court-appointed guardian*), or a person appointed as a testamentary guardian by the child's natural parent.

The Family Court or High Court can also appoint themselves as a guardian. In these cases the court often appoints Oranga Tamariki to act on the court's behalf. This is known as Guardianship of the Court, or Ward of the State.

If you have any questions on any of these issues, or need assistance, please contact GRG's National Support Office on: **0800 472 637** or office@grg.org.nz

Some Caregivers and Legal Guardians are not Parents

A caregiver or legal guardian is not a parent for the Student Allowance parental income test if they are:

- ◆ receiving or have received a **Foster Care Allowance, Orphan's Benefit or Unsupported Child's Benefit** for the student
- ◆ providing or have provided a transition support living arrangement for the student under section 386AAD of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989

If a caregiver or legal guardian is not excluded from the definition of parent for the above reasons, we must consider if they are acting in place of a parent of the student.

Permanent caregivers

Permanent caregiver is a term used by Oranga Tamariki to describe a person who is providing a permanent care arrangement for a child. This is usually a court-appointed guardian, but it can include a caregiver who does not have legal orders.

A permanent caregiver is defined as a:

- ◆ special guardian who is appointed by the Family Court to provide a long term, safe and stable care arrangement
- ◆ person who has legal orders under the Care of Children Act 2004 in substitution for a section 140 agreement under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989

- ◆ person who provides a permanent living arrangement without having legal orders, after custody orders in favour of the chief executive of Oranga Tamariki have been discharged. This is sanctioned through a family group conference.

Most permanent caregivers will receive Foster Care Allowance, Orphan's Benefit or Unsupported Child's Benefit for the student at some point. This means they are not considered parents for Student Allowance. If a permanent caregiver has not received one of these payments, we must consider if they are acting in place of a parent of the student.

Permanent caregivers may also receive financial assistance through the Permanent Caregiver Support Service. This service provides financial and non-financial assistance to permanent caregivers to support the needs of the children in their care. The service is provided through a non-Government organisation on behalf of Oranga Tamariki.

Generally financial assistance provided through the service is for one off or short term needs and is not regular or ongoing. This means a permanent caregiver who has received financial assistance from the service is still likely to have overall financial responsibility for the student.



Merle Lambert
National Support
Coordinator

Merle's Support Group Update It's a time to farewell and welcome

We say farewell to **Robyn Robertson** who has reluctantly stepped down from the **New Lynn Support Group Coordinator** role.

Robyn first became a member 6 years ago when she and husband Graeme took on the care of their granddaughter Lily. It wasn't long before Robyn and Graeme recognized the significant benefits that a support group offered grandparents and they began offering a Grandparents Raising Grandchildren support group as an extension to their faith-based outreach. *"Grandparents needed a place to hang out" said Robyn, "to be with like-minded people who they could relate to and understood them and have an adult conversation".*

This was an opportunity for grandparents to meet and unload and get some stimulation away from their caring duties. We thank both Robyn and Graeme for the support and fellowship they have been able to offer grandparents over the years and wish them well in whatever awaits them in the next part of their journey.

A sad farewell also to **Kay Higgins**, our Support Group Coordinator for Te Kuiti.

Kay has had a long association with Grandparents Raising Grandchildren as a member and then taking on the Support Group Coordinator role over the past decade and has been actively involved in her local community to raise the profile of **Grandparents**

Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ over the years. She has been so successful in doing this that a variety of local organisations and fundraisers such as the Z service station's 'Good in the Hood' programme, The Warehouse Group's 'Bags 4 Good Neighbourhood' Programme and



the Te Kuiti Violet Ladies have generously donated to improve the lives of GRG Caregivers and their Tamariki and Rangitahi in the Te Kuiti region over the years.

Initiatives organised by Kay and the GRG Support Group to utilise these funds have included providing swimming lessons for grandchildren through the Waitomo District Aquatic Centre and flu vaccinations for our members, who just by the very nature of their age

and underlying health conditions are susceptible to serious illness and so many grandchildren rely on their care.

Thank you, Kay, for all that you have done and achieved for the Te Kuiti Grandparents Raising Grandchildren members over the years. It's time for you to put your feet up and collect from the bank of kindness you have shown to others!

Welcome to the SGC Team

Jennifer Porter representing Matamata/Piako



Jennifer recognises both children and families thrive with appropriate support and that our children are our future. She would like all children to have the best possible start.

As a young mum Jennifer was active in breast feeding support and child development education, she went on to serve on both Kindy and Scout committees continuing to support children in her community. As community pharmacist Jennifer was able to help support the health of the communities she works in.

In recent years Jennifer has coordinated an exercise and social group for over sixty fives in Morrinsville. She had the honor of attending the 100th birthday of one of the guests.

Jennifer loves to garden, cook, sew and walk in our native bush—she finds relaxation through these activities. Jennifer is aware that grandparents themselves need nurturing too, Jennifer is hopeful that her skills and experiences will support grandparents and kincarers in their own health and wellbeing, enabling them to build strong, resilient, thriving families.

Jennifer is supported by her husband Graeme, who has carved a reputation for himself through providing refurbished community donated bicycles to many GRG families in the Waikato area through The Bike Library.

Helen Hewitt representing Auckland Central



Helen understands the life changing circumstances that grandparents are faced with when needing to step in to care for their grandchildren.

Having experienced the impact of drug and alcohol abuse and consequently family breakdown, she has empathy and understanding towards families with similar stories to tell. Through this, she sensed the feeling of responsibility that grandparents have, to ensure grandchildren have protection from harm from physical, mental health, drug or alcohol abuse. She has compassion and admiration for the grandparents who step up into the role of raising their grandchildren.

Helen has experience and confidence in dealing with the court system, often an integral part of getting children into grandparent care. She is looking forward to being able to make a difference in the lives of both the grandparents and the children in central Auckland, and to be able to share skills and talents that she has picked up through her experience.

Helen is also passionate about giving back to the community and liaising with other support groups and other organizations that could contribute to the ongoing work of GRG.

Would you be interested in volunteering your services for GRG?

If you are raising a grandchild on a full-time basis or have an understanding of the blessings and challenges that this role brings and would like to share your experience and abilities to support and empower other like-minded family/whanau, we would like to hear from you.

Our team of Support Group Coordinators is growing enabling us to provide much needed support to more grandparents. However, there are some areas that we are still looking to cover: **Kerikeri, Whangarei, Bream Bay, Hibiscus Coast, North Shore, Avondale, Waitakere, Henderson, New Lynn, Glenn Eden, Mangere/ Onehunga, Te Puke/Papamoa, Tauranga, Opotiki, Taupo/ Turangi, Te Kuiti, New Plymouth, Dannevirke/Tararua, Levin/Otaki, Wellington, Upper West Coast, Marlborough, Dunedin, North Otago and Otago Coastal.**

Email: Merle@grg.org.nz or call us on FREE on 0800 472 637 (0800 GRANDS)

Grand Reflections



Celebrating Christmas with Caregivers

2021 was again marred and masked(!) by lockdowns, restrictions and learning how to keep you and your whānau safe. Shirley Afoa, Support Group Coordinator for Papakura was able to provide a much needed afternoon full of smiles, laughter and celebration.

A Support Group Christmas

A message from Shirley Afoa, Support Group Coordinator, Papakura.

I trust you all had a Merry Christmas and enjoyed time with your beautiful families?

“It was nice to be able to get some of our Grandparents together again after such a long time. Due to COVID-19 restrictions we had to keep numbers down this year. It was disappointing that we couldn't share it with more people. It was a lovely day with a bouncy castle, food and swimming”.

A big thank you to all the organisations, businesses and clubs that supported the GRG Papakura Support Group throughout their very kind donations throughout 2021:

Kiwi Harvest, Papakura Lions Club, Whitcoulls Papakura, Catalytic Foundation, A Shoe Box Christmas, Foster Hope – Auckland, Sanitarium, and the Zonta Club of Papakura—you made a significant difference to the Support the Papakura Support Group provides local caregiver families.



“Can I reuse my disposable medical face mask safely?”

The surprising answer is YES! Wash and re-use your disposable face mask, expert says.

Disposable medical face masks can be washed up to 10 times and still offer better protection than homemade fabric masks, a Nelson-based infectious disease expert has found.

The findings were that disposable masks, which started off with 95 per cent efficacy, could be washed and dried 10 times and still work well, Everts said.

The best way was simply washing in warm tap water for 10 seconds while gently massaging them, with no detergent, and then drying them to kill the bacteria, for reuse. This reduced the efficacy down to 80 to 90 percent, which Everts said was still good. Two brands were still close to 90 per cent after 10 washes.

Soaking masks in hot boiled water for five minutes had a similar effect.

Dr Richard Everts, Nelson Marlborough Health infectious disease specialist featured in a story published by Stuff written by Vanessa Phillips—Dec 27 2021





GRG Support Groups Nationwide



Meetings are held during school terms - with public and school holidays excluded unless otherwise stated.

KAITAIA

Contact: Pam Walters

022 658 3443 / Kaitaia@grg.org.nz

Meets: Every 3rd Thursday of the month at 10.30am.

Location: Hope Christian Centre, 234 Commerce Street, Kaitaia.

AUCKLAND CENTRAL

Contact: Helen Hewitt

021 469 964 / Aucklandcentral@grg.org.nz

Meets: Please contact Helen if you're interested in attending a Support Group Meeting or you would like support.

PUKEKOHE/WAIUKU

Contact: Anne Doddrell

09 237 8161 / Pukekohe@grg.org.nz

Meets: The last Tuesday of the month at 10am

Location: St. Andrews Church, 43 Queen Street, Pukekohe.

MATAMATA-PIAKO

Contact: Jennifer Porter

027 683 6207 / matamata-piako@grg.org.nz

Meets: Second Wednesday of the Month, 10am to 11.45am

Location: Morrinsville Community House, Masonic Room, 43 Canada Street, Morrinsville.

TE KUITI

Currently vacant. If you or someone you know would like to consider becoming the local Support Group Coordinator for the Te Kuiti area, please contact **Merle Lambert** at merle@grg.org.nz / **021 246 0553**

TAUMARUNUI

Contact: Jo Wickham

07 896 7515 / Taumarunui@grg.org.nz

Meets: First Monday of each month at 10am

Location: Women's Refuge Centre, 57 Miriama Street, Taumarunui.

DARGAVILLE

Contact: Sandy Zimmer

09 439 4420 / Dargaville@grg.org.nz

Meets: First Tuesday of each month at 12pm

Location: Whanau Focus, Victoria Street, Dargaville—Next to the Bakehouse

NEW LYNN

Currently vacant. If you or someone you know would like to consider becoming the local Support Group Coordinator for the New Lynn area, please contact **Merle Lambert** at merle@grg.org.nz / **021 246 0553**

NGARUAWAHIA/HUNTLY

Contact: Trevor Don

027 229 2041 / Ngaruawahia@grg.org.nz

Meets: Last Monday of the month at 10am

Location: Ngaruawahia Community House, 13 Galileo Street, Ngaruawahia.

HAMILTON WEST

Contact: Pat Davis

022 600 7672 / Hamiltonwest@grg.org.nz

Meets: Last Thursday of the month at 10am to 11.30am

Location: St Davids Hall, Rifle Range Road, Dinsdale, Hamilton (Opposite Frankton Primary School) .

TOKOROA

Contact: Debbie Newton

027 284 2103 / Tokoroa@grg.org.nz

Meets: Last Friday of each month at 10am

Location: Tokoroa Council of Social Services, Gate 1, Tokoroa Hospital (1st building on the right). Parking available at the back.

ROTORUA

Contact: Anne Donnell

022 059 5107 / Rotorua@grg.org.nz

Meets: Third Monday of each month at 9:30am

Location: Linton Park Community Centre, 16 Kamahi Place, Pukehangi, Rotorua.

TAMAKI/EAST

Contact: Tess Gould-Thorpe

09 535 6903 / Tamaki@grg.org.nz

Meets: Date and location varies. Please get in touch with Tess for confirmation of the next meeting.

PAPAKURA

Contact: Shirley Afoa

021 129 4151 / Papakura@grg.org.nz

Meets: Second Thursday of each month at 10am

Location: Smiths Avenue Community Hall, 20 Smiths Avenue, Papakura.

TE AWAMUTU

Contact: Ruth Gilling

022 045 4475 / Teawamutu@grg.org.nz

Meets: Date and location varies. Please get in touch with Ruth for confirmation of the next meeting.

HAMILTON EAST

Contact: Maria Marsh

022 454 4078 / Hamiltoneast@grg.org.nz

Meets: First Monday of the month at 10am to 11.30am

Location: Desert Spring Community Centre, 408 Peachgrove Road, Fairfield, Hamilton.

TAUPO/TURANGI

Currently vacant. If you or someone you know would like to consider becoming the local Support Group Coordinator for the Taupo/Turangi area, please contact **Merle Lambert** at merle@grg.org.nz / **021 246 0553**

TAURANGA

Contact: Pam Downing

027 224 9169 / Tauranga@grg.org.nz

Please contact Pam if you are interested in attending a Support Group Meeting or would like support.

KATIKATI

Contact: Cathie Kenyon

021 088 78686 / Katikati@grg.org.nz

Meets: Last Wednesday of the month at 10am

Location: St. Pius Catholic Church, 89 Beach Road, Katikati.

HASTINGS

Contact: Nga Ngatae Heather

022 341 7789 / Hastings@grg.org.nz

Meets: Date and time varies, please contact Nga for confirmation of meetings.

Location: The Octagon Room, All Saints Church, 23 Puketapu Road, Taradale.

WAIRARAPA

Contact: Tere Lenihan

021 509 493 / Wairarapa@grg.org.nz

Meets: Date and location varies. Please get in touch with Tere for confirmation of the next meeting.

HUTT VALLEY

Contact: Serenah Nicholson

021 743 414 / Huttvalley@grg.org.nz

Meets: Date and time varies. Please get in touch with Serenah for confirmation of the next meeting.

Location: Pomare Community House, 55 Farmer Crescent, Taita, Lower Hutt.

MOTUEKA

Contact: Rankeilor Arnott

021 133 7299 / Motueka@grg.org.nz

Meets: Every second and fourth Thursday of the month at 12.30pm to 3.00pm

Location: Motueka Community House, Decks Reserve, Motueka.

EAST CHRISTCHURCH

Contact: Sandra Murphy

021 025 52415 / Eastchristchurch@grg.org.nz

Meets: Every first Friday of the month at 10am

Location: 168 Stanmore Road, Linwood.

COFFEE GROUPS

Kaikohe

Moengaroa 027 644 0978

Whangarei

Christine 021 061 5387

Warkworth

Shirley 09 423 7052

Waitakere

Waiora 022 647 3032

South Auckland

Virginia 09 277 7514

Morrinsville

Jennifer 027 683 6207

Whitianga

Gillian 027 454 0314

Cambridge

Brenda 027 438 5401

Napier

Nga 022 341 7789

Porirua

Roma Paull 022 050 4761

Greymouth

Donna 0274 840 688

WHAKATANE/KAWERAU

Contact: Karlene McCormick

021 022 20328 / Whakatane@grg.org.nz

Meets: Date and time varies. Please get in touch with Karlene for confirmation of the next meeting.

Location: Liberty Church, 65 Wairaka Road, Whakatane.

PALMERSTON NORTH

Contact: Jacqui Phillips

021 229 0455 / Palmerstonnorth@grg.org.nz

Meets: First Thursday of the month at 1pm and 6.30pm (1.5 hours to 2 hours long)

Location: Christian Community Church, 54 Pascal Street Palmerston North.

LEVIN/OTAKI

Currently vacant. If you or someone you know would like to consider becoming the local Support Group Coordinator for the Levin/Otaki area, please contact **Merle Lambert** at merle@grg.org.nz / **021 246 0553**

WELLINGTON/KAPITI

Contact: Cecilee Donovan

021 1586643 / Wellington@grg.org.nz

Currently vacant – Wellington. If you or someone you know would like to consider becoming the local Support Group Coordinator for the Wellington area, please

CENTRAL WEST COAST

Contact: Janette Miller

021 119 0828 / Centralwestcoast@grg.org.nz

Meets: TBC

Location: TBC

ASHBURTON

Contact: Karen Kilgour

027 741 2039 / Ashburton@grg.org.nz

Meets: Date and location varies. Please get in touch with Karen for confirmation of the next meeting.

NAPIER

Contact: Beth Thurston

022 073 9900 / Napier@grg.org.nz

Meets: Date and time varies, please contact Beth for confirmation of meetings.

Location: The Octagon Room, All Saints Church, 23 Puketapu Road, Taradale.

WHANGANUI

Contact: Bob Wilson 027 268 7678 /

Whanganui@grg.org.nz

Meets: Every Thursday at 10am

Location: 48 Alma Road, Whanganui.

PORIRUA

Contact: Roma Paull

022 050 4761 / Porirua@grg.org.nz

Meets: Every second Thursday of the month at 10am.

Location: Porirua RSA, 5-7 McKillop Street, Ranui

NELSON

Contact: Sharon Norriss

03 548 6710 / Nelson@grg.org.nz

Meets: Every second Friday of the month

Location: Stoke Methodist Church, 94 Neale Avenue, Stoke, Nelson.

SOUTH CHRISTCHURCH

Contact: Anna Clare

021 085 77404 /

Southchristchurch@grg.org.nz

Meets: Every first Friday of the month at 10am

Location: 168 Stanmore Road, Linwood.

SOUTHLAND

Contact: Colleen Saunders

03 216 4173 / Southland@grg.org.nz

Meets: Second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 10am

Location: Family Works, 183 Spey Street, Invercargill.

CURRENTLY VACANT

Would you be interested in volunteering your services for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren?

With over 5700 members across the country Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ rely on volunteer Support Group Coordinators to provide hands on support, information and advocacy in addition to running regular support groups for members to get that peer support that is so valuable when sharing their experiences and accumulated knowledge. Currently we are seeking Support Group Coordinators in the following areas: **Kerikeri, Whangarei, Bream Bay, Hibiscus Coast, North Shore, Avondale, Waitakere, Henderson, New Lynn, Glenn Eden, Mangere/ Onehunga, Te Puke/Papamoa, Opotiki, Taupo/Turangī, Te Kuiti, New Plymouth, Dannevirke/Tararua, Levin/Otaki, Wellington, Upper West Coast, Marlborough, Dunedin, North Otago and Otago Coastal.**

Contact: Merle 021 246 0553 (9am to 2pm, Monday–Thursday) / Merle@grg.org.nz

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ

Established in 2001 as a registered charitable trust (CC20205), GRG supports over 5500 grandparent and whanau care families nationwide, representing around 9,000 caregivers and over 14,000 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.

For more information about GRG please contact us at office@grg.org.nz or +64 9 418 3753 | 0800 472637

Other Handy Helpline Numbers

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

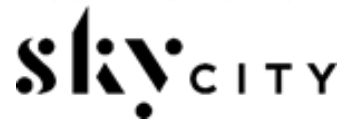
0800 376 633 Youthline, helping families and youth

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

Thank you to our Funders for their support for our newsletter



Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ

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162 Mokoia Road
Birkenhead
Auckland 0626

PO Box 34892
Birkenhead
Auckland 0746

Phone: 09 418 3753

Email: office@grg.org.nz

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

Join GRG or subscribe to our newsletter via our website at GRG.NZ

Or click the red Join GRG button below

Have your circumstances changed?

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter or you have changed address please update your details by clicking the green **Update Your Member Details** below or contact the GRG Trust NZ National Support Office

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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. *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

GRG.NZ



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COVID-19



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