



Monthly News • August 2011

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



Data base: 4806 Whanau Carers.

From the National Office:

Our recent Survey:

You spoke and we heard you! Thank you so much! We recently had two surveys going on email and another by mail.

Total responses = 720 (both email & Paper mail)

Email resulted in 330 responses:

Children not under CYF = 285:

Children under CYF/OHF/Barnados = 45

Questions in italics below were not asked from email survey.

Paper mail: resulted in 364 responses: (26 were voided due to blank forms/not all questions answered/obvious errors therefore omitted.)

Children under CYF = 91

Not Under CYF = 280 (**Greater figure due to some having children in the one family under CYF and not under CYF**)

Past involvement with CYF = 239

Getting CYF Board payments = 50 (it was noted that some under CYF were getting UCB not board payments from CYF)

Getting UCB/Orphans benefit = 216

Not getting any payments = 104(greater figure with these 2 as and some getting UCB for 1 and not another)

X 6 noted they were getting DPB/family Tax credits, Service Orders, Liable parent payments.

Number of grandparent carers = 357 (some circled grandparent and kin carer, kincarner and heart family, grandparent/heart family or grandparent/Kincarner/Heart family, (not related) hence numbers greater, they felt they fitted all categories and fair enough too) some noted they had raised the mother as a foster child/adopted child. 9 also said they were great grandparents. (Included as grandparent)

Number of kincarers = 30 (Aunts/Great Aunts etc.)

Not related/heart family carers = 24

Therefore **total sample** from our data base tells us 136 families are under CYF and 558 families are not under CYF.

Another 65 came in late (not counted in above) via mail, but this did not change the flavor of outcome. What an incredible response!

Have you registered for our fabulous conference yet?

November 16 & 17th "Growing Stronger Together" www.grg.org.nz for form. Come on GRG members we want you there, we designed this especially with you in mind. After 12 years of being on the end of the national phone we know your issues and stresses. We know what affects you and wish to give back to our grass roots, this is why the conference is so wonderfully priced & designed just for you! Spaces are filling, but still more room at discounted rate.



New GRG Coffee group/Hunterville:

Sharon has kindly offered to host these please contact her on 06 3229795

New Support Group Tauranga:

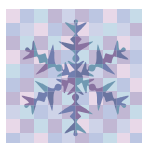
Susan Pryor 07 5332364 email thehobbitsdaughter@yahoo.com.au

Welcome ladies.

Our web site: www.grg.org.nz

On the home page on the left hand menu we now have a new button titled *Radio interviews*, clicking on this will take you to links where you can listen to our interviews.

Snow In Auckland: August 15th 2011. 12.45pm & 2pm.



Sitting at my computer, it was getting colder and colder, knees and tootsies were complaining, I moved to look out the window, the sky blackened and I could not believe my eyes. Falling from the sky were tiny specks of white which blew sideways in the wind! Not enough to whiten the ground but I can tell you we have had snowflakes and hail in Birkenhead Auckland! Stay warm folks. *Di*

Field Officer, Alison's farewell message:

As a Field Officer for the GRG Trust for the past few years I have learnt so much about the selfless grandparents and kin carers and I would like to say that I do hope during that time I have been able to give you some support and useful advice. I now feel it is time to retire, but will think of you all often and you have my total admiration for the safe haven you have given the children who come into your care. I know from the conversations I have had with you that there is disruption and financial issues that you have to overcome, but that you do this to ensure that the children you love and care for get a better chance in life and that you do so willingly.

To the co-ordinators: Thank you. I have really enjoyed working alongside you all and you do a wonderful job. Take care of yourself. I am sure that your new Field Officer will enjoy working with you all. Best Wishes, Alison Cuthbert.

Thank you also Alison, happy retirement. GRG Trust Board.

New Field officer for GRG: 0800 472 637 toll free

Sharon Lee: Has had 25 years' experience in various fields of counseling. Sharon has specific experience in working with families and the challenges of parenting, including children who have experienced trauma and issues of grief/loss for grandparent/kin carers and their grand/kin also, siblings of the original parents of the children in their care. She can assist with Family Group Conference's as a support person when practical or give advice. Auckland callers use 09 419 0045 11am - 5pm week days. Welcome Sharon.

Book of the month:

MAKING TOAST by Roger Rosenblatt (who is also a journalist for Time magazine).

2010 Harper Collins US. It's in the Public Libraries.

The grand-parents are both well-known journalists with full time work touring and speaking around the U.S. Their daughter dies suddenly of a heart anomaly. She has a loving husband and three children aged 18mths, 4 and 6yrs. They move in to care for the children while the husband continues to work and provide the income. So as well as writing on the grief of each one of them they also show the pain and pleasure of giving up their lives to care for the little ones.

Community Connect Special Alert

E-news from Family and Community Services

Have your say about how we protect our children

Every child has the right to thrive, belong and achieve. That's the Government's vision for all New Zealand children. Unfortunately, every two hours, two children in this country are physically, sexually or emotionally abused, that's around 20,000 each year.

So the Government is asking you – the New Zealand community - to be part of the discussion as to what we can all - collectively - do about this.

To get the discussion moving, a 'green paper' has been put together with ideas the Government wants to test with the public before any decisions are made.


This includes ideas about how we can show leadership, how policy can better respond to the needs of vulnerable children and how we can deliver better services that really can make a difference to the 15% of children who are not belonging, thriving or achieving.

This is your opportunity to have your say now and be part of those that care about the future of our kiwi kids.

How to get involved?

Read the paper at [Green Paper for Vulnerable Children website](#).

Let us know what you think by making a submission before 28 February 2012.

You can make a submission [online](#), on the [Facebook page](#), in person at hui or fono, by email to:  yourresponse@childrensactionplan.govt.nz

Or posting your submission to:

Green Paper for Vulnerable Children
PO Box 1556
Wellington



Next Steps

Once all of the submissions have been received and analysed, a White Paper will be released outlining the Vulnerable Children's Action Plan.

Follow us on [Twitter](#) or like us on [Facebook page](#).

South Auckland Grand/kin carers:

City Impact church have worked with GRG members on the North Shore for many years, they are now offering their services to South Auckland members. They have a fantastic team who will do home repairs, gardens, lawns, general clean ups, build fences, paint and wallpaper. This service is free! Please phone GRG Co Virginia on 256 1620 to register with your needs.

An archaeologist is the best husband a woman can have. The older the woman gets the more he is interested in her.

North Shore and South & East Auckland GRG Members:

We are a private training institute and train counselors in a level 6 diploma. We are offering to Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, who would be interested in utilizing the services of a student counselor, at **no cost** for your members or their families or volunteers/staff. Our students are required to do 200 hours of face to face counseling to gain their Vocational Practice Diploma and require clients to work with to do this work. Members can self-refer directly to the counselors: Requirement is for their and our protection that you are actually a member of GRG.

North Shore - Albany and surrounding areas Danie Marais ph: (09) 473-5320 or 021 556-853

Papakura and surrounding areas Angela Bimler 021 030-4441 or email bimler1@xtra.co.nz

New Zealand Institute of Professional Counseling Quantum Education Group

East Auckland- Cheryl Brussow (09) 535 8814

Manukau Technical Institute

Your Voices:



Email 1:

I was put onto your amazing group after I had helped my son raise his two boys for 3 1/2yrs and was and still are going thru our battles. Also read the stories in My Generation paper thank God you put that article in the paper resulting in giving hope & support to all out there!

Email 2:

Just thought I'd send a note to the overprotective and exhausted Nana's out there of which I am one. 5.30am starts my day, to be ready to home school by 8.30. Living in a beautiful remote area brings a different type of stress and one of those is no kids for my grans to play with, and no school to go to, and incidentally no one for me to have an adult conversation with.

We do see other people once a week, when we go to town and buy groceries, library, and the little one gets to go to a wonderful school which has been understanding and welcoming to us in our circumstances.

This gives her a chance to learn valuable social skills and make friends.

I sympathise with your reader whom needed more energy. Keeping up with a 12 and a 6 year old has made me younger every day. Home schooling them has made me wiser, worrying about their future has taught me to do without sleep, and faith has made me realise that I'm raising two wonderful kids who will one day make their own choices in life. All I can do is give them the best example I can. To understand none of us are in the ideal situation, all of us are products of nature, nurture and environment. This is what has made us who we are. So to all the Grand Mothers out there just remember: We Will Be Known Forever by the Tracks We Leave.

Energy and love to all Julie

Prayer in last newsletter:

Emails and phone calls came in to say how wonderful the prayer was. How it related to so many of you. Thanks to Jeanette.

Full house:

Not only do I raise my 3 grandchildren but I also look after my elderly parents who are quite frail. Yes it does makes for a busy tiring life, but well worth it. When I collapse into my chair after all the children, plus us, have been fed and showered/bathed and we are nearly ready for the little ones bed time, it always brings a smile to see my elderly Mum & Dad taking turns in reading and playing simple games with their great grandchildren. Best of all, I slip into another room and quietly read a few pages of my book.



Sailing single gran

A new sanity saying in our home:

In dealing with all the internal and external issues in raising our grandchildren which often come on a daily basis, my husband and I have a new saying, "this too shall pass" . Issues may be swapped for something slightly different on a different day, but that too shall pass.

Tired out.



Shampoo Alert!

As I was conditioning my hair in the shower this morning, I took time to read my shampoo bottle. I am in shock! The shampoo I use in the shower that runs down my entire body says "for extra volume and body"! Seriously, why have I not noticed this before? Now I understand why I am so "full-figured"! Tomorrow I am going to start using "Dawn" dish soap. It says right on the label "dissolves fat that is otherwise difficult to remove." It pays to read the warning labels!



Years Past:

I have found a long memory has helped me deal with displaced children for over four decades. Back in 1944 on Xmas morning, two little girls woke in the early hours of around 3/4a.m. At that stage they didn't know who the real Santa was. Having no electricity they did the rounds of five other siblings using a candle to suss out their presents. They both decided their teenage sisters' gifts were what they fancied. Xmas morning arrived to the sound of their big sister calling to their mum, about the exchange of gifts. Mum spots the rightful gifts and asks the two rat bags where they got them from. They both swore they had a spoken to Santa and he had actually handed them the talcum powder, handkerchiefs and the cake of soap. Mum asked 50 times did you really speak to Santa. Both simultaneously answered "Yes we did, he was standing by the chimney". According to them, the golliwogs belonged to the teenage sister. This was a sister and I.

Billie.

Re-cycle What?

Recycling in the old days, the young have no idea!

In the queue at the shop, the cashier told the older woman that she should bring her own bags because plastic bags weren't good for the environment.

The woman apologised to him and explained, "We didn't have the green thing back in my day."

The cashier responded, "That's our problem today. The former generation did not care enough to save our environment!" He was right, that generation didn't have the green thing in its day.

Back then, they returned their milk bottles, lemonade bottles and beer bottles to the shop. The shop sent them back to the plant to be washed and sterilized and refilled, so it could use the same bottles over and over. So they really were recycled.



But they didn't have the green thing back in that customer's day.

In her day, they walked up stairs, because they didn't have an escalator in every shop and office building. They walked to the grocery shop and didn't climb into a 300-horsepower machine every time they had to go two miles.

But she was right. They didn't have the green thing in her day.

Back then, they washed the baby's nappies because they didn't have the throw-away kind. They dried clothes on a line, not in an energy gobbling machine burning up 220 volts - wind and solar power really did dry the clothes. Kids got hand-me-down clothes from their brothers or sisters, not always brand-new clothing.

But that old lady is right, they didn't have the green thing back in her day.

Back then, they had one TV, or radio, in the house - not a TV in every room. And the TV had a small screen the size of a handkerchief, not a screen the size of Wales.. In the kitchen, they blended and stirred by hand because they didn't have electric machines to do everything for them.

When they packaged a fragile item to send in by post, they used a screwed up old newspaper to cushion it, not polystyrene or plastic bubble wrap. Back then, they didn't fire up an engine and burn petrol just to cut the lawn.

They used a push mower that ran on human power. They exercised by working so they didn't need to go to a health club to run on treadmills that operate on electricity

But she's right, they didn't have the green thing back then.

They drank from a fountain when they were thirsty instead of using a cup or a plastic bottle every time they had a drink of water. They refilled their writing pens with ink instead of buying a new pen, and they replaced the razor blades in a razor instead of throwing away the whole razor just because the blade got dull.

But they didn't have the green thing back then.

Back then, people took the tram or a bus and kids rode their bikes to school or rode in the school bus instead of turning their mums into a 24-hour taxi service. They had one electrical socket in a room, not an entire bank of sockets to power a dozen appliances. And they didn't need a computerized gadget to receive a signal beamed from satellites 2,000 miles out in space in order to find the nearest Pizza Hut.

But isn't it sad the current generation laments how wasteful the old folks were just because they didn't have the green thing back then?

Learning to let it be

One of the toughest challenges of parenting is learning to live with what you can't control – if we're realistic, that's just about everything! Our children's feelings are firmly outside our control, and yet that doesn't stop us from trying regularly. When they express a feeling that makes us uncomfortable, guilty, disappointed, or sad – how quickly do we minimise, distract, scold, or lecture? A good question to ask yourself in that moment is "Am I more concerned for my child's or my own feelings?" You don't have to agree with what they're feeling, just reflect back what you hear and see, and they will feel confident that you're a safe place to off-load the tough stuff. Parents Inc. Top Tip

Big Bake Bikkies- Hansells Baking Club!!

250g butter
½ cup golden syrup
2 cups raisins
2 tsp Hansells Vanilla Essence
1 tsp Hansells Baking Soda
2 tbsp hot water
1¼ cups flour
1 cup sugar
2 cups coconut
2 cups rolled oats



Place butter, golden syrup and raisins in a saucepan large enough to mix all the ingredients. Heat over a moderate heat until the butter melts. Remove from the heat and stir in the vanilla essence. Dissolve the baking soda in the hot water and add to the saucepan. Mix well. Mix the flour, sugar, coconut and oats together until combined. Add this mixture to the saucepan and mix with a wooden spoon until combined. Using a measuring tablespoon, take spoonful of mixture and drop onto a baking paper lined oven tray. Allow room for spreading. Bake at 180 degrees C

for 10 to 12 minutes, or until the biscuits are golden. Leave to cool on the oven tray for 5 minutes, then remove to a cooling rack. When completely cold, store in an airtight container. Makes 68.

GRANDMA'S AGE

Little Johnny asked his grandma how old she was. Grandma answered, "39 and holding." Johnny thought for a moment and asked, "How old would you be if you let go."

What my GRG support group means to me, says Laura:

The kids are grown, and you've turned the second bedroom into a sewing room. Dad's built a workshop out back, and since he's retired, he can wander out there any time he wants to tinker. Grocery shopping takes no time at all, and leaving town for a day or two can be done on a whim unless there's a pet. Then suddenly, the news comes. "Congratulations! You are the proud guardians of three bouncing children ranging in weight from 30 to 70 pounds. They will not be delivered. Come pick them up -- now."

"This is a whole lot different than having the grandchildren come for a visit," said Laura, who with her husband Ray cares for her 10-year old grandson and 4-year old (twin) granddaughters. "My youngest child is 26. My husband's youngest is 24. This is new all over again."

Laura says she was able to cope with the sudden energy in the house, but it was an adjustment for Ray. "We found a group for grandparents raising grandchildren, and we started attending. "We could say whatever we wanted, express our feelings, thoughts, frustrations, whatever; because there were other grandparents there dealing with the same thing. Our situation was actually better than some of them. Many were left with infants and are dealing with diapers; one was left with three babies, triplets."

Once Ray became part of the support group, he was fine. He would go to the grandparents' meeting even when Laura couldn't go.

"It is a release and a support," said Laura of grandparents' meetings. We hope to get more grandpas to come. Most of the time it's the grandmas, handling everything. Maybe others have answers for things that would help you.

From past experience, Laura expects to see people from diverse situations and income backgrounds. "Some are really struggling financially, and some look as if they don't have a struggle in the world. You're all in the same boat if you come because you're a grandparent, or yes, great-grandparent, raising your grandchildren. Everyone has a need to be filled."

Not only is such a support group good for the grandparents, but the children see that they're "not the only ones" either.

"What we want to do with our grandparents is not only show support but to pass things on that are still good. Sometimes when grandparents first get these kids, they don't have anything to start with -- shoes, underwear, toys, car seats, baby beds. If you need something, we may be able to help find the resources."

The reason grandparents have their grandchildren are varied and many: abuse; prison etc. Laura says the idea is not to look down on the parents of the children. "The parents for whatever reason are not able to take care of their kids. The important thing is the kids are getting what they need, and the people providing that have support."

Di & Team (you as a caregiver are part of our team)

Members Support Manager

heoi ano, na

E te Atua, aroha mai..... O God shower us with love. Ka kite

Formal GRG Support Groups: All welcome.

Locality, Name, Phone, E-mail Address.

Auckland East ** Tess Gould-Thorpe 09 535 6903 pan@xnet.co.nz

Auckland North ** Bonnie Williams 09 473 9055 willingclan@xtra.co.nz

Auckland South ** Virginia Peebles 09 256 1620

Auckland West ** Debbie Hall 09 818 7828 debron@xtra.co.nz

Mangere East * Teresa Van Kuylenberg 09 974 2388 splodg@gmail.com **(New)**

Canterbury North** Jan Farquhar 03 313 1585 farlaw@xtra.co.nz

Coromandel* Keitha Jenkins 07 866 8273 northbrook@slingshot.co.nz
 Dannevirke * Denise Henman 06 374 5855 denise.henman@xtra.co.nz
 Dargaville * Barbara Sterling 09 439 4555 ladybee@vodafone.co.nz
 Hokitika * Fran Edwards 03 755 8142
 Huntly ** Lodi Liebert 07 828 6123 rulo@clear.net.nz
 Invercargill * Christine Marsh 03 216 9773 chrisandbob@xtra.co.nz
 Kaitia * Irene Turner-Crombie 09 408 3446 iturnercrombie@gmail.com
 Kaiwaka* Sarah Rogers 09 431 2194 sarah_jane@clear.net.nz
 Kaikohe* Ngaro Poa 027 637 42357 ngaropoa@thook.co.nz **(New)**
 Levin* Ann Waddell 06 362 7269 ann.hen@xtra.co.nz
 Napier ** Jo Bromley 06 843 5737 jo.b@slingshot.co.nz
 Nelson ** Paula Eggers 03 548 6660 paulaegggers2000@yahoo.com.au
 Otago * Est/Nth Aad & Leonie 03 465 1764 omaandopa@xtra.co.nz
 Rotorua ** Win Macredie 07 345 5003 winmacredie@xtra.co.nz
 Rotorua ** Cyril Anderson 07 347 8163 judycyril@xtra.co.nz
 Tauranga ** Susan Pryor 07 5332364 the.hobbitsdaughter@yahoo.com.au **(New)**
 Te Kuiti * Leonie Tirrell 07 878 3220
 Te Hiku Northland* Koha Mehana 09 408 3788 **(New)**
 Upper Hutt ** Margaret Pearson 04 976 9475 maggiemagpie@paradise.net.nz
 Wairarapa ** Wendy Archer 06 377 2236 marcher@paradise.net.nz
 Wanganui ** Lynette Dickinson 06 344 2830 lynette.deedee@gmail.com
 Wellington ** Cecilee Donovan 04 477 0632 cecileed@gmail.com
 Whakatane * Shirley Faulkner 07 322 8524 shirleyfaulkner@xtra.co.nz
 Whangarei ** Janet Puriri 09 435 0044 jpuriri@ihug.co.nz
 * Telephone support only: ** Telephone Support & Meetings.



Can we help you? Members Services Nationwide
Toll free line 0800 472 637

Field Officers:

Sharon Lee: ext 2

Sharon is a counsellor with 25 years' experience. She has specific experience in working with families and the challenges of parenting, including children who have experienced trauma and issues of grief/loss for grandparent/kin carers and their families who are also parents, siblings of the original parents of the children in their care. She can assist with Family Group Conference's as a support person when practical or give advice. Auckland callers use 09 419 0045 11am - 5pm week days.

Nola Adams: ext. 3

Telephone advice can be given on the following topics Justice and Prison system, including Youth Court. Family Court applications: for persons wishing to self-represent: Child Youth and Family representation where practicable/advice. Disability advice and the Schooling system. Nola can be contacted on 06 845 3141 (Hawkes Bay callers).

Diana East: ext. 4

Diana has in-depth knowledge on issues impacting on grandparents raising grandchildren; has many years working with mental health consumers and carers. This gives her a very good understanding of a wide range of mental health issues and issues effecting grandparents raising. Hours 9am – 5pm 04 970 8177 (Wellington callers).

Tricia Corin: ext. 5

Tricia is a Beneficiaries Advocate. If you are having problems with your Benefits from Work and Income / Inland Revenue or are unsure if you are on the right Benefit, needing advice on UCB or DPB, Disabilities Allowance or recoverable and non recoverable advances . Hours 11am - 5pm 07 8685490 (Waikato callers)

Very informal coffee groups – For times and venues:

Auckland Central: June 09 630 2409
Coromandal/Tairua/Whitianga: Brenda 07 866 4476
Christchurch (New Brighton): Annie 03 388 0928
Hamilton: Yvonne 07 829 8246
Howick/Manukau: Lorraine 09 271 2900
Marton/Huntermville: Sharon 06 322 9795
New Plymouth: Sue 06 756 7542 /027 8569242/txt
Palmerston North: Triphena 06 355 8316
Tauranga: Colleen 07 578 5341
Te Kauwhata: Denise 07 826 3779
Wairarapa: Sheryl 06 304 9957



If you would like to start an informal coffee group in your area, please contact Di at Head Office

Together we will and do make a difference in a child's life.

Please feel free to send/email this report on to others whom you think may be interested.

Please pass this on to other grandparents/kin carers you know of.

GRG Trust Head Office hours are 9am – 2pm daily. (We raise grandchildren too)

Views expressed in this newsletter may not be the views of the GRG Trust.

We are a voluntary not-for-profit organisation.

All donations to the GRG Trust are tax deductible.

Abbreviations:

GRG – Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust

H/O – Head Office

H/B – Handbook

BOT – Board of Trustees

CYF – Child Youth and Family Services

Co's – Co-ordinator/s

UCB – Unsupported Child Benefit

WINZ – Work and Income NZ now DWI – Department of Work and Income

Grands – Grandparents

G/c – Grandchild/ren

Kin – Kinship Carers

BPS – Business Professional Services Limited. Our secretarial service.

Are your children under CYF?

Do you have trouble getting hold of your Social Worker? If this is the case then you can call 0508 CARER (0508 227 377) and they will then make sure you are spoken to by your Social Worker and if they are not available then someone else will talk to you.

www.grg.org.nz or www.kin.org.nz or www.raisinggrandchildren.org.nz Email

office@grg.org.nz

National Convenor: Di Vivian

Free Phone 0800 GRANDS or 0800 472637 ext. 1 (not for use for Auckland callers)

Landline users only. Auckland callers (09) 480 6530

Postal Add: PO Box 34 892 Birkenhead. Auckland 0742

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter please contact the Trust Office as this is where the total mail out membership is kept. Moved home or planning to? Be sure to let us know.



We are a Charitable Trust