



"The Kinkare Committee"
Our brave Treasure's opinion

Kinkare..... *Caring for relative carers and those denied access*

MONTHLY NEWS



Kinkare Founders
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www.kinkare.com.au



Editorial

Hello Everyone,

This newsletter is just slightly late but by design this time rather than me just getting snowed under. I am taking a holiday from July 5th until the middle of August. As a result, **there will not be another newsletter until September.**

Every couple of years I let myself have a break and I hope you will forgive me a slightly extended one this time. I am off to Canada to a Soroptimist Convention from July 6th to 14th and then doing some sightseeing after that. You may recall I mentioned some time ago that visiting Soroptimists from Canada showed me a very lengthy article in the **SI Americas magazine about grandparents raising grandchildren.** I intend to pursue that when I am over there, but make no mistake, I am on holidays!!!

Last month, I had the privilege of visiting with our counterparts in South Australia, Denise and John Langton from Grandparents for Grandchildren SA Inc.

This month, we are highlighting the great work of NAPCAN with the following extract from their website

NAPCAN

"Our Organisation

NAPCAN has a proud history of achievement. Co-founded in 1987 by Rosemary Sinclair AO and Christine Stewart, NAPCAN has made a significant contribution to the wellbeing of Australia's children.

Today NAPCAN has a modern corporate structure as a single national company limited by guarantee.

NAPCAN is governed by a voluntary Board. The Board operates with the support of its advisory committees, NAPCAN Councils in each state and territory and an extensive network of professionals, practitioners and concerned individuals who all donate their time and expertise to support NAPCAN's mission.

Led by the CEO, a small team of professional advocacy, policy and program staff are employed across the country. This dedicated team brings a broad range of expertise and experience to the design and implementation of NAPCAN's strategies for change

As a charity NAPCAN has both DGR (deductible gift

recipient) and PBI (public benevolent institution) status with the Australian Tax Office.

These people and their supporters are doing some amazing things for grandparents in their state. They do have a little bit of funding from their State, but they are constantly having to fight tooth and nail to get it continued. Oh for the day when needed programmes get funding and those doubling up on someone else's issues have to fight for recognition!

We also had a very welcome visit at QCOGs from Danny Manich, COTA NSW. If anyone thinks the dream we all share for a **National Body** is dead, they are very much mistaken. We have persisted through many failed political promises and even more from NGOs. **It is not if it will happen, but when.** That, however, largely depends on how much support you, the ordinary grandparent, are willing to give to your local support group leader.

Our phone lines are open to hear YOUR plans to get YOUR community to celebrate Grandparents Day!



Queensland Grandparents Day first birthday!

Sunday November 6th 2011

What are YOU doing?

recipient) and PBI (public benevolent institution) status with the Australian Tax Office.

Our Mission

The mission of NAPCAN (National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect) is to advocate on behalf of children and young people and to promote positive change in attitudes, behaviour, policies, practices and the law to prevent abuse and neglect and ensure the safety and wellbeing of all Australian children

In the last year, more than 30,000 individual Australian children were found to have been abused or neglected. A tragic number of children died, thousands of children were seriously injured and tens of thousands of children were physically, psychologically and emotionally damaged.

Child abuse occurs right across Australian society and the long-term, personal, social and economic costs of child abuse and neglect are immense.

NAPCAN believes that it is time to draw the line in the sand and break this cycle of abuse.

NAPCAN works with researchers, professionals, government, business, the media and committed individuals to bring about this change."

www.napcan.org.au



More information from the Department's website.

Charter of rights for a child in care

Children and young people in out-of-home care have particular needs that must be addressed in order to ensure their safety and improve their emotional, physical and psychological well-being.

The charter of rights under the [Child Protection Act 1999](#) describes the core rights that apply to every child and young person who is subject to the custody or guardianship of our department.

The Act establishes the following rights for children and young people in care:

1. to be provided with a safe and stable living environment
2. to be placed in care that best meets the child's needs and is most culturally appropriate
3. to maintain relationships with the child's family and community
4. to be consulted about, and to take part in making, decisions affecting the child's life (having regard to the child's age or ability to understand), particularly decisions about where the child is living, contact with the child's family and the child's health and schooling
5. to be given information about decisions and plans concerning the child's future and personal history, having regard to the child's age or ability to understand
6. to privacy, including, for example, in relation to the child's personal information
7. if the child is under the long-term guardianship of the Chief Executive, to regular review of the child's care arrangements
8. to have access to dental, medical and therapeutic services, necessary to meet the child's needs

9. to have access to education appropriate to the child's age and development

10. to have access to job training opportunities and help in finding appropriate employment

11. to receive appropriate help with the transition from being a child in care to independence, including, for example, help about housing, access to income support and training and education

We must advise a child or young person of their rights.

All children and young people have a right to participate in decision making about their own life. Children and young people's participation is a right, not an option.

The Child Protection Act, section 5 establishes participation as a legal right for children and young people.

The legislation requires that the Act is administered in a way that ensures the views of the child and the child's family are considered and the child and the child's parents have the opportunity to take part in making decisions affecting their lives.

The Act has clear requirements for seeking and considering the views of children and young people, and includes a charter of rights for those children and young people who are in the custody or guardianship of the chief executive.

Our policies and procedures, as outlined in our Child Safety Practice Manual, require the participation of children at key decision making points throughout the case planning cycle.

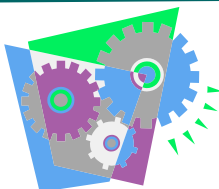
[Charter of rights books](#)

These books are distributed to all young people entering care in Queensland, and supplements the information and advice already provided to children and young people by the department.

[Kid's rights](#) (PDF 689 KB), aimed at 4 to 10 year olds, is in the form of a children's story book, and is distributed complete with a set of colouring pencils that can be used throughout.

[My journey in care](#) (PDF 2.52 MB), aimed at 10 to 18 year olds, uses a notebook style layout with cartoons and photos, including Indigenous artwork from a young person in care.

It was very exciting for us to have **John and Janet "attend" through Skype from Cairns and Neville Abbey via speaker phone** at our meeting this month. We all need some lessons in the new technology, but are really eager to master it. So far it has been quite successful.



We also welcomed **Danny Manich from COTA NSW** who is supporting grandparent groups in NSW with the hope that they will also form their own version of QCOGs in the near future. Danny may well be a candidate for a Skype participant next meeting. He was certainly an active participant in the last meeting.

At the management committee meeting, we fine tuned our technology and then spent the rest of the time on the previously reviewed **Mission Statement, Objectives and membership guidelines** to ensure they still keep pace with our new structure. There were small changes necessary and general agreement about a very basic fee structure.

This session, together with the afternoon session on **constitution**, will set the **basis for our incorporation planning**. I am very pleased to be able to say that consensus was reached quite quickly in both meetings and I thank everyone for their open and candid comments by email before the meetings. I believe that this stopped us from bogging

QCOGs **Queensland Council** **of Grandparents**

down during the meetings themselves. The outcomes and minutes will be distributed by Sue during the week. (All finally put into one constitution document for comments.)

Soon after this was the **first Ministerial meeting with Minister Curtis Pitt**. It is in Minister Pitt's portfolio that the Carers Advisory Council sits. As you know, grandparents now have two positions on this council. One is specifically for a grandparent raising grandchildren and the other is for a grandparent representative. These appointments have not yet been made, but the Minister has asked for the process to be fast tracked. The full council serves for two years with the next one starting in October 2011.

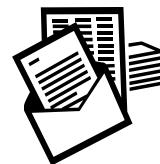
Grandparents Day, Nov 6th 2011, was also discussed and Minister said his Dept are very happy to support this once again. It was jointly agreed that this year the focus would be on getting Local Governments and Community organizations to take a larger role this year so that we have celebrations in more centres than was possible last year. QCOGs on its own, of course, could not possibly do this justice.



Curtis Pitt, Minister for Disability Services, Mental Health and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships



We Should Write a Book!



This is the old "Our Personal Page". It is very important that readers send in their stories to be published on this page to inform others in the community just how different our lives are. This page may also contain comments on calls, or answers to queries raised from time to time.

For the purposes of this page, second generation carers or those denied access will be referred to as "grandparents" and those who rightfully should be raising the children will be referred to as "parents". In some cases the carers may be great aunts or uncles, step grandparents or even great-grandparents etc. This helps to keep the roles of all concerned clear. Similarly, all children will be referred to as "grandchildren". All stories will be edited to protect the identification of anyone involved and in keeping with available space. Accompanying illustrations are from the public domain and are not meant to reflect any party concerned. **All letters are the opinions of the writers not necessarily KinKare's.**

A story from home this month. We encourage you to both write stories and respond also to those published. As the disclaimer says, these are **your** stories and are not meant to reflect the opinions of KinKare. However, there are just too many with similar themes and the only way we will ever make changes is to ensure the community knows just how necessary these changes are.

HINT: Please always reread your letters as many times the meaning is not as clear to a reader as it is to you. This is particularly true when you say "he" said. We need to know who "he" is. Handwritten letters are always more difficult to read accurately.

My granddaughter was taken into care by the Dept of Communities. Her two half siblings were and still are residing with me under Family Law Court Orders. The younger lived with his sister before Departmental involvement. My granddaughter was placed over 2,000kms away in another state and not with her siblings.

When this arrangement was formalised by the Dept we (brothers and grandparent) were placed on restricted access with the Dept stating 3 visits a year would maintain the sibling relationship. This restriction was lifted by the Childrens Services Tribunal but, as the Dept stated at the tribunal hearing, reunification and the revoking of the long term guardianship order stayed the same.

Whilst responding to the department's paperwork for the tribunal hearing I discovered inaccurate and untruthful information and consequently presented this to the Crime and Misconduct Commission who sent it back to the Dept for investigation. I had unveiled untruths and inaccuracies before and had an ongoing complaint with the Complaints and Review Unit.

I had regular contact with the Minister's office, meetings with senior Departmental delegates (one with the Minister and the chief executive at a forum) and had a constant communication with the Child Safety Service Ctr. I had a chance to ask the Premier if consequences were uniform across all her departments from police to child safety and she said yes.

The manager of the Child Safety Service Ctr placed a communication strategy on myself and my two grandsons. If the Minister and the Dept. did not have so many untruths and inaccuracies in their paperwork I would not have needed to respond so often.

The Dept and the CMC unsubstantiated the allegations of misconduct however it was stated the CSO erred in her record keeping. I had provided statements from independent witnesses however words such as "honest" and "not deliberate" were used in description of the CSO involved. The team leader was described as having interpersonal communication problems.

As these dealings seems to be a culture within the Dept and my case is not unique, my aim is to gather similar cases with the objective to present these as "like" cases with a view to gain changes with how the Dept handles grandparents and our relationship with our beloved grandchildren.

Changes are needed as departmental workers hide behind an act designed for the protection of children leaving us powerless to intervene once their grip is on our grandchildren.



Laughter is the best Medicine



Jumping On the Bed

Gotta Love Women~

A fifty-ish Woman was at home happily jumping on her bed and squealing with delight.

Her Husband watches her for a while and asks, "Do you have any idea how ridiculous you look?, What's the matter with you?"

The Woman continues to bounce on the bed and says, "I don't care, I just came from having a Mammogram and the Doctor says I have the Breasts of an 18 year-old".

The Husband said, "What did he say about your 52 Year Old Ass?"

"Your name never came up," She replied.

(Men . . . They Just Never Know When To Shut Up, Do They?)



Pecans in the Cemetery

On the outskirts of a small town, there was a big, old pecan tree just inside the cemetery fence. One day, two boys filled up a bucketful of nuts and sat down by the tree, out of sight, and began dividing the nuts.

'One for you, one for me, one for you, one for me,' said one boy. Several dropped and rolled down toward the fence.

Another boy came riding along the road on his bicycle. As he passed, he thought he heard voices from inside the cemetery. He slowed down to investigate. Sure enough, he heard, 'One for you, one for me, one for you, one for me...'

He just knew what it was. He jumped back on his bike and rode off. Just around the bend he met an old man with a cane, hobbling along..

'Come here quick,' said the boy, 'you won't believe what I heard! Satan and the Lord are down at the cemetery dividing up the souls!'

The man said, 'Beat it kid, can't you see it's hard for me to walk.' When the boy insisted though, the man hobbled slowly to the cemetery.

Standing by the fence they heard, 'One for you, one for me. One for you, one for me.'

The old man whispered, 'Boy, you've been tellin' me the truth. Let's see if we can see the Lord...?'

Shaking with fear, they peered through the fence, yet were still unable to see anything. The old man and the boy gripped the wrought iron bars of the fence tighter and tighter as they tried to get a glimpse of the Lord.

At last they heard, 'One for you, one for me. That's all. Now let's go get those nuts by the fence and we'll be done....?'

They say the old man had the lead for a good half-mile before the kid on the bike passed him.

People say that there is no difference between "finished" and "complete".

I say there is....

Marry the right person, and you're "complete".

Marry the wrong person, and you're "finished".



BLUE BIRD OF HAPPINESS, MY ASS!
It's Friggin' Freezing. There's snow up my ass, all the food's covered with 3 feet of this white shit, and you want ME to sing? What?? Anne Murray's "Snowbird"? Piss Off!!

Next year, I'm flyin' to Jamaica, and smokin' dope!!

After both suffering depression for a while, me and my husband were going to commit suicide yesterday. But strangely enough, once he killed himself I started to feel a lot better, so I thought #%*+ it, I'll soldier on!



Meeting Notices



Please always ring first as there maybe changes for special purposes.

Kinkare Groups:

Beaudesert:

Place: Beaucare 44 Tina St
Day/Time: 4th Friday of the month 10:30am
Contact: Maree ☎ 3287 1664

Cleveland:

Place: Donald Simpson Ctr, 172 Bloomfield St
Day/Time: 3rd Friday of the month 10:30am
Contact: Maged ☎ 3207 7200

Eagleby:

Place: Eagleby Community Ctr, Cowper Ave
Day/Time: 2nd Friday of the month 10:30am
Contact: Maree ☎ 3287 1664 or Danni ☎ 3299 1764

Ipswich
Please ring first

Ipswich:

Place: Family Relationship Ctr, East St
Day/Time: 3rd Tuesday of the month 10:30am
Contact: Donella ☎ 3810 4800

Nerang:

Place: Nerang Neighbourhood Ctr, Martens St
Day/Time: 4th Wednesday of the month 12:30pm
Contact: Marjie ☎ 5527 3034

GAGS Inc

Place: Energex House, Cnr Wallace Nth & Tallon St
Caboolture
Day/Time: 2nd Wednesday of the month 10:00am
Contact: Helen ☎ (07) 5498 9333
✉ gagsinc@hotmail.com

Western Australia:

Granpower:

Email: info@granpower.org.au
Ph 0409 294 231

South Australia:

Grandparents for Grand-children SA Inc:

Ph Denise (08) 8410 6642
Email: denise.gfgsainc@bigpond.com

Grandparents as Parents

Sunshine Coast:

Place: Comm. Capital Ctr, Sportsmans Pde, Bokarina
Day/Time: 2nd Friday 10am-12noon
Contact: Donna ☎ 5413 1514

Indigenous G'parent Support Group:

Place: Centacare
Day/Time: Weekly
Contact: Tess Rowley ☎ 3252 4371

North Queensland:

Cairns and District Grandparents Support Group:

Place: Hambledon House Community Ctr, Edmonton
Day/Time: 1st Wednesday of the month 9:30am
Contact: John or Janet ☎ 4055 5161

Grandparents in need of Support (GINOS)

Contact: Nev ☎ (07) 4723 3520
✉ trcota@bigpond.net.au

The Townsville G'parents Social Support Group:

Place: Dan Gleeson Memorial Gardens
Day/Time: Last Friday of the month 10:30am-12 noon
Contact: Nev ☎ (07) 4723 3520

G'parents Raising Grandchildren – Atherton Tablelands:

Place: Family Support House, 38 Mabel St
Day/Time: 1st Monday of the month 9:30am-11:30am
Contact: Jane Buschkens ☎ (07) 4091 3850

Always room for more!

Please send in details that you would like published on this page.

(To ensure publication, send written information to Maree as per the footer contact details.)



Seniors Enquiry Line – 1300 135 500

This is not just for the old and frail! Ask about the **Time for Grandparents Programme** while you are there.

Centrelink (Parent or Guardian Line) – 13 61 50

www.centrelink.gov.au

Centrelink social workers know about most of the community organisations in the area, not just money matters.

Please make an appointment. It is worth your while.

Child Support Agency – www.csa.gov.au The CSA is a Federal Government organisation which helps support separated parents – and grandparents who are primary carers – with the transfer of payments for the benefit of their grandchildren.

Community Legal Centres

The national website is www.naccl.org.au

or for Queensland, see www.qails.org.au

Usually these centres can provide free legal services, short of actually representing you.

Legal Aid – www.nla.aust.net.au (the national website)

and **Legal Aid Queensland** – 1300 651 188

www.legalaid.qld.gov.au

Family Law Court Australia (Queensland) – 3248 2200

www.familycourt.gov.au (national website)

Parentline – 1300 301 300

www.parentline.com.au

This is for all types of parents and you are not excluded!

Kids' Help Line – 1800 551 800

www.kidshelp.com.au

This is for your kids. They often need a place to talk privately and so far I have had only good reports.

Commission for Children Young People and Child Guardian

1800 688 275

3224 4225 (Queensland office)

www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au

Relationships Australia – 1300 364 277

www.relationships.com.au

Don't forget to look after yourself and your relationships with other family members and spouse!

Child Safety After Hours Service Centre (Queensland)

1800 177 135

3235 9999

Foster and Kinship Care Support Line

1300 729 309

Mon—Fri 5pm—11:30pm

Sat and Sun 7am—11:30pm

www.childsafety.qld.gov.au

Keep a Diary:

The diary should include day, date and time of any contact and notes regarding the event. This might simply be that you sent a birthday card or email.

For those denied access, there could well come a time when the children ask why you were not there when they were growing up. As adults, they can see that you wanted to be and tried hard to be there for them. For those raising, the day may come that you are accused of stopping their parents from seeing them and the above applies again.

In either situation, the diary may well be helpful if ever the matter does go to a court.

Ask Questions of any Professional:

No matter if you are speaking to a lawyer, medical person or a Child Safety Officer, you are entitled to be fully briefed on their role and what they can and can't do for you as well as their qualifications.

Ask legal people how many grandparent cases like yours they have handled and what their success rate is. Ask medical, or similar, people if they are prepared to sign a report that you can give to your solicitor or Child Safety.

Never attend a Child Safety Meeting without someone else with you and make sure you are given a Carer Handbook. In Queensland it is permissible to tape the session as long as you declare your intention.

Make an appointment for a Centrelink Social Worker:

If you need to deal with Centrelink, don't just do so over the phone or even the counter. The social workers are much more knowledgeable. Tell them your basic situation at the time of making the appointment to give them time to look into the subject.

Seek Free Legal Opinion first:

There are many places where you can get free legal opinion other than Legal Aid. The Community Legal Centres have nothing to gain by misleading you as they are not funded by your wallet.

Look after YOURSELF!!!

No matter if you are denied access, raising or somewhere in between, the pressures are huge. Even young grandparents can be worn down by the constant anxiety and frustration.

Your grandchildren need you to be at your best!

Make sure you attend your doctor regularly and mention your situation. It is also very important for you to have someone outside the situation to talk freely to.

This is where support groups are at their best.

You can talk to others who understand your concerns and may even be able to tell you how they coped in a similar situation.

You will find there are other very good parents who have had the same thing happen to their family.

You will find you are not alone.