



"The Kinkare Committee"
Our brave Treasure's opinion

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

MONTHLY NEWS



Kinkare Founders
Maree, Danni, Miriam

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www.kinkare.com.au



Editorial

Hello Everyone,

Another year is well and truly underway. The expense of sending the children to school is always a mountain to jump over. Remember, though, to keep your receipts for school expenses as some of them are able to be claimed on your taxes.

This month, we are going to look at some of the possible benefits grandparents raising grandchildren may be entitled to. We will also outline the eligibility criteria. Always bear in mind though, that every case is individual and you must check your own personal circumstances with Centrelink or your accountant/financial advisor.

Kinkare is always looking for ways to keep this publication relevant to the needs of our grandparents. This month, we are investigating the viability of introducing a Frequently Asked Questions column.

We have several "experts" who have offered to help answer the questions our readers may ask. So, during the coming month, please send in your questions. The topics can be almost anything as I am sure, if you are wondering about something there will be others wondering about the same thing. The questions may be relevant to either raising grandchildren or denied access. We will endeavour to find someone well versed in the matter to give you an answer.



Please also keep your personal stories coming in. So many others reading this newsletter take great comfort in knowing they are not alone and love to hear from people who have faced and overcome similar circumstances.

Until next month,
Happy reading,
Maree

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grandparents
INFORMATION
1300 135 500

Many of you will already know about the good work that the **Seniors Enquiry Line** does for grandparents. However, as we are always getting new readers, I thought it was time to once again publish information about the Time for Grandparents programme and the range of services that are available.

Some years ago, our State government put aside some money to trial a programme offering respite to **grandparents raising grandchildren without the help of our child protection system**. The Seniors Enquiry Line, a section of Lifeline, was asked to manage the programme.

They were so successful, that this programme has continued and grown throughout the State ever since.

Supporting Queensland Grandparents

Grandparents are constantly telling me how much help the people at SEL have given them in all areas, not just this respite programme.

The Time for Grandparents programme offers financial assistance for **after school activities and school camps**. This includes activities such as Guides and Scouts; PCYC programmes; a wide range of sporting clubs and other recreational pursuits that children of all ages may want to join. The specific activities in your area may be different so it is essential that you contact them before signing up.

The other arm to this programme is their own Grand Camps. These are weekend camps for both grandparents and grandchildren. The grandchildren have a fun programme fully supervised by professionals while the grandparents get to take some time off or catch up with great support from other grandparents. There is also a range of professional support for grandparents to access if they wish.

Federal Government Allowances

Below are **some notes about Centrelink benefits** that you MAY be entitled to. Do not take these as exhaustive and always make an appointment to speak with a Centrelink Social Worker to check your eligibility.

Family Tax Benefit A is the most common payment. It is income tested and paid per child. If your "Actual Annual **Family Income**" is **below \$45,114** your income will not diminish your payment.

Maximum Fortnightly Payments (per child) are:

under 13 yrs \$160.30; 13-15yrs \$208.46 16-17 \$51.24 18-24 \$68.74

A sliding scale applies for incomes over \$45,114.

The family supplement (\$726.35) is paid at the end of the financial year to those eligible.

Family Tax Benefit B assists single income or sole parent families. **It is based on income and the age of the youngest child.** The benefit is paid per family. The primary earner must have an adjusted taxable income under \$150,000 pa.

Maximum Fortnightly Rate (per family):

Youngest child under 5 \$136.36 Youngest 5-15 \$95.06

The family supplement is (\$354.05)

Child Care:

The current rate for non school age, up to 50hrs, is \$3.68 p hr or \$184 per week. School age rate is 85% of this.

The work, study, training test is waived for grandparents.

Parenting Payment:

This is paid to singles with a child under 8 or couples with a child under 6.

There is an **income and assets test** applied and this gets very complicated especially for couples so make sure you get good advice as to your eligibility.

Singles can earn \$170.60 p/f+ \$24.60 for each additional child, with a reducing payment after that. Couples \$124 p/f with reducing payments over that.

Maximum Fortnightly Payments::

Partnered \$424; Single \$611.90; Partnered but separated \$508.20. Conditions apply.

Double Orphan Pension: Is paid if the child is an orphan or the parent/s are in jail, or a similar institution, or missing. **This payment has no income or assets test.** This payment is NOT taxed.

DOP is \$55.20 p/f

There are other conditions whereby extra payments may be made.

Other Benefits

Depending on your circumstances, you may also be eligible for other benefits including the **Baby Bonus and Child Support**. It is very important that you make an appointment to **see the Centrelink Social Worker**.

Benefits are payable to those "parenting" **whether or not there are formal orders in place**. Of course you must prove you are parenting, usually over 35% of the time. Again the Social Worker will explain how to do this.

Q'ld Dept of Child Safety Carer Allowance

Foster and kinship carers receive a fortnightly caring allowance, which is a contribution toward the costs of caring for the child or young person placed with them. It covers items such as:

- food, clothing, household provisions,
- gifts, pocket money, entertainment
- other everyday costs of caring for a child.

[Respite carers](#) receive the allowance in proportion to the amount of time they provide care for a child or young person.

- The allowance is not considered a payment for caring and it is not a source of income.
- It is a reimbursement toward the real costs of providing care.

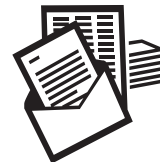
The fortnightly caring allowance is not subject to tax and should not be cited as income for any purpose, such as yearly tax returns, applications for [Federal Government allowances and benefits](#), or when applying for loans from financial institutions.

* All payments and allowances are indexed in January each year in line with the consumer price index (CPI).

Carer payments (as at January 2011*)	Frequency of payment	0 - 5 years	6 - 10 years	11+ years
Fortnightly caring allowance	fortnightly	\$421.43	\$454.01	\$493.52
Start-up allowance	one-off	\$90.81	\$90.81	\$90.81
Establishment payment	one-off	\$454.01	\$454.01	\$454.01
High support needs allowance	fortnightly	\$148.18	\$148.18	\$148.18
Regional remote loading (10 per cent)	fortnightly	\$42.14	\$45.40	\$49.35



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.

They Are Only on Loan

Lenore Mc Donald is my name and I am an author of over 11 self published books mostly motivational books for women and now I find myself in a situation that is quite distressing and realize that I need to write a book to help other grandparents cope with this horrible situation.

My son married a woman in 2007 who was already 3 months pregnant she seemed to be friendly and warm at first but as soon as their child was born she became a different person and shut me out of her life in one swoop. My son seemed to be a little confused at the situation but of course took her side to the extent that I have never been invited into their home which is 15 minutes away from where I live.

The only contact I have with my grand daughter is when he brings her for no more than 2 hourly visits every 2 months. She is 18 months old and doesn't have any idea who I am she remembers my garden more than she does me because I have made it specially with children in mind with little fairy nooks and other statues to make it an adventure.

I was so hurt as my son and I were very close but then I realized that the more I protested the more he told her and the worse it became so I had to hold my tongue and suffer in silence. Now I realize that this problem is more widespread than I ever imagined and hope that by writing a book for others to read we can band together and not beat ourselves up over this situation.

Remember NOBODY CAN PUT YOU DOWN UNLESS YOU LET THEM.

I am calling this book "THEY ARE ONLY ON LOAN" as I was told this by an old boss of mine back in the sixties when he realized that his children had grown up and away from him and his wife. I need to interview couples/singles who have had similar experiences with their grand children visitation etc so I can complete this book and get it out to help others in the same situation as us.

My contact is lwoolich@hotmail.com or 3889 4649 to organize an interview.



Grandparents Rights ???

I am so often asked about this topic as the media and well meaning friends and relatives do tend to imply that grandparents have rights to see their grandchildren. They only have "moral" rights in this regard. The law takes the opposite point of view that **the grandchildren have the right to spend time with their grandparents.**

There can be no doubt that the law should be heavily based on the rights of the child. However, it should also be VERY certain that the bests interests of the child are not only "seen" to be addressed but must actually "be" addressed.

KinKare believes that, whilst there have been some positive shifts in philosophies of late, there is still a long way to go to consistently meet the needs of some of our most vulnerable children.

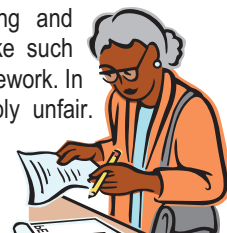
The concept of shared parenting brought with it the idea that the adult parents had to get over their differences for the best interests of the child. So too, other adults in the child's life must put the child's interests

first and it is a very widely held belief that the extended family is essential to a child's healthy development. Hence the time old saying that it "takes a village to raise a child". The repercussions of the attachment theory really need to be taken on board by our courts and child protection authorities.

The options open for grandparents with access related issues are not happy ones. ALWAYS the first step is to try to come to an amicable arrangement with the parent/s. This may be by family agreement or, most times, it may need an outside mediator.

Family Relationship Centres provide a basic early Family Dispute Resolution service for free. There are others also on offer, but even with legal aid these usually involve a fee.

Court proceedings are emotionally devastating and often expensive. It is extremely unwise to take such steps unless you have done a great deal of homework. In the past the rulings often seemed unbelievably unfair. That is beginning to change. Good luck and be prepared to do your homework if you choose this path.



Laughter is the best Medicine

My Resimay

To hoom it mae cunsern,
I waunt to apply for the job what I saw in the paper. I kin Type
realee qwik wit one finggar and do sum a counting.
I think I am good on the fone and I no I am a pepole person. I no
my spelling is not too good.
My salerery is open, I kin start emeditely.
Thank yoo in advance fore yore anser.

Sinseerly,

Tiffany

PS : Because my resimay is a bit short I sent a pickture of me.



**Dear Tiffany,
It's OK honey, we've
got spell check.
See you Monday**

King Ozymandias of Assyria was running low on cash after years of war with the Hittites. His last great possession was the Star of the Euphrates, the most valuable diamond in the ancient world. Desperate, he went to Croesus, the pawnbroker, to ask for a loan. Croesus said, "I'll give you 100,000 dinars for it." "But I paid a million dinars for it," the King protested. "Don't you know who I am? I am the king!" Croesus replied, "When you wish to pawn a Star, makes no difference who you are."

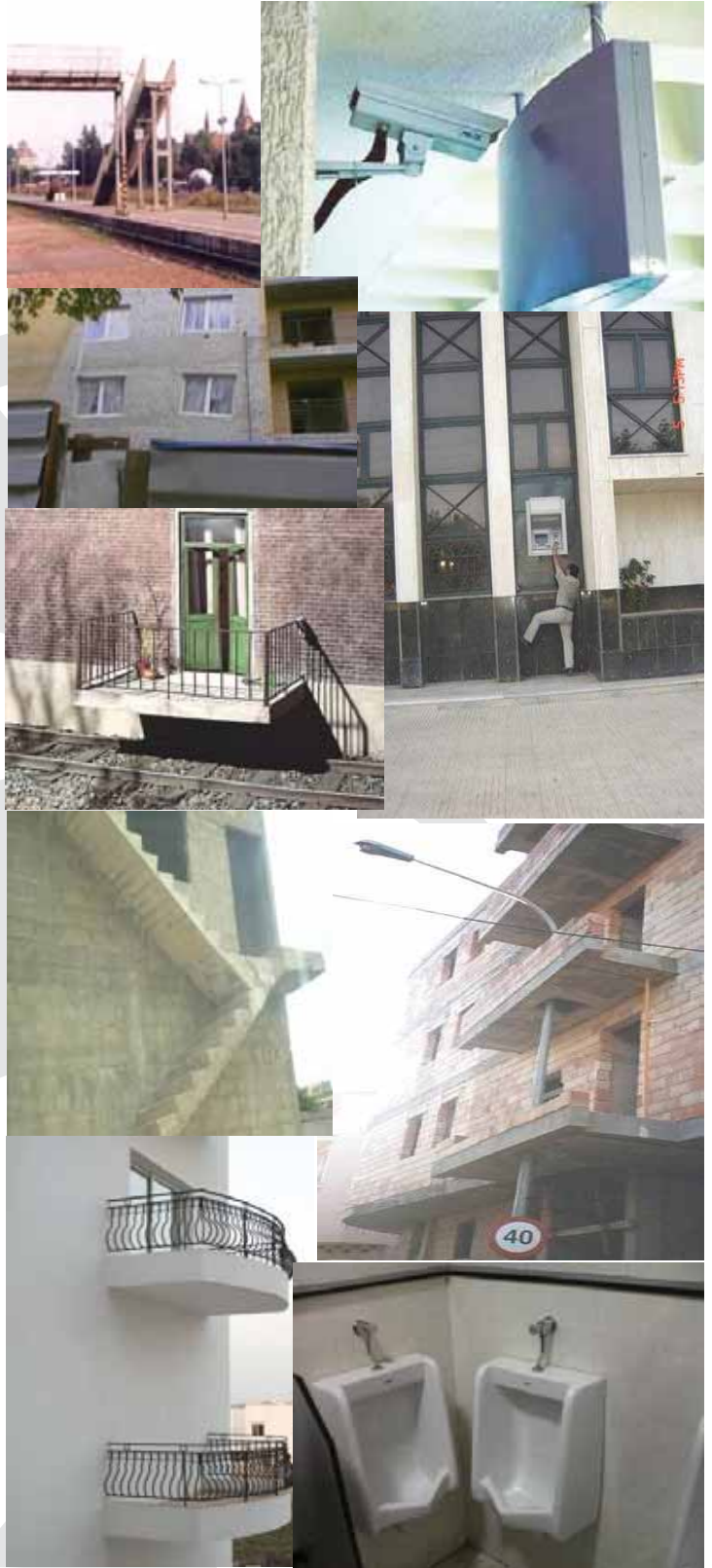
Evidence has been found that William Tell and his family were avid bowlers. Unfortunately, all the Swiss league records were destroyed in a fire ...and so we'll never know for whom the Tells bowled.

A marine biologist developed a race of genetically engineered dolphins that could live forever if they were fed a steady diet of seagulls. One day, his supply of the birds ran out so he had to go out and trap some more. On the way back, he spied two lions asleep on the road. Afraid to wake them, he gingerly stepped over them. Immediately, he was arrested and charged with-- transporting gulls across sedate lions for immortal porpoises.

Back in the 1800's the Tate's Watch Company of Massachusetts wanted to produce other products, and since they already made the cases for watches, they used them to produce compasses. The new 5. compasses were so bad that people often ended up in Canada or Mexico rather than California.

This, of course, is the origin of the expression --
"He who has a Tate's is lost!"

World's Best Builder!!





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.)



Helpful Contacts



Tips to Live By

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 (grand)children.

Community Legal Centres

The national website is www.nacalc.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!

Crisis Care (Dept Child Safety Queensland after hours)

1800 177 135

3235 9999

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.