



"The Kinkare Committee"
Our brave Treasure's opinion

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

MONTHLY NEWS



Kinkare Founders
Maree, Danni, Miriam

Edition:
May 2011

www.kinkare.com.au

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Editorial

Hello Everyone,

Have you had enough of holidays yet? What a confusing time it was. I was never sure if shops were supposed to be open or children supposed to be at home! Now it is beginning to look like winter is on its way. Our poor old dog is feeling the cold this year.

The results of the Cogs elections have been finalised and appear in the article this month. Along with some of the future plans the management committee is considering.

Cogs received some lovely letters of congratulations and have already met with the appropriate Government agencies to keep the channels of communication open with Ministers.

Grandparents Day is also coming up soon and planning has begun. Please help make this year

bigger and better than last year by putting your hand up to help in you area. There may be some funding available through different places and we will need to know who is willing to assist so we can apply very soon.

As well as activities you would like to see run or help with, we will also need to come up with a slogan for the day so put your thinking caps on for that one too.

All ideas and input or questions should be sent via the official COGs email address :

chaircogs@gmail.com

or PO Box 2254 Keperra Qld 4054

Happy reading,
Maree



**Grandparents Day
has its first birthday!**



Queensland Association of Independent Legal Services Inc

ABOUT FREE LEGAL ADVICE

Our Centres' Services

There are 34 accredited Community Legal Centres located throughout metropolitan and rural Queensland. Most centres deal with all major areas of law and provide services to people who live or work in the surrounding area.

Community Legal Centres provide an initial consultation on most matters of law to any member of the community.

All centres provide their services free of charge.

www.qails.org.au

Specialist Services

Other centres are specialist services offering expertise in a particular area of law, such as immigration or employment, or they provide services tailored to the needs of a specific client group, such as refugees or seniors.

Staff and Volunteers

All the Community Legal Centres listed on this site provide access to qualified solicitors, legal advisors and support staff who can explain your legal rights and obligations, and outline various options and steps you can take to solve your legal problem.

Chair & A/Sec :Maree Lubach 15 Mimi Crt, Mt Warren Pk, Q'ld 4207 ☎ (07) 3287 1664 ✉ mlubach@optusnet.com.au

Treasurer: Bevin Pope 4 Hillside Dve, Daisyhill, Q'ld 4127

Kinkare is auspiced by Connect the Coast Assoc. Inc



More information from the Department's website.

What is kinship care?

Kinship care is provided by a person who is a relative, considered to be family or a close friend, or is a member of the child or young person's community.

Kinship carers can assist children and young people to maintain connections with their family.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, a kinship carer may be another Indigenous person who is a member of their community, a compatible community or from the same language group.

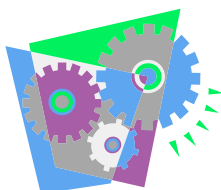
Steps to becoming a kinship carer

Once you have made the decision that you are interested in being a kinship carer, there are a number of steps you go through to become an approved kinship carer.

The aim of this approval process is to make sure that you:

- are a suitable person to be an approved kinship carer, and all members of your household are suitable persons to associate with children and young people on a daily basis
- are able to meet the standards of care in the Statement of Standards outlined in the *Child Protection Act 1999*
- are able to help work towards achieving goals for the safety, care and protection of children or young people.

Cogs, as it has most often been called until now, started in 2002 after an OPSO forum about grandparents raising grandchildren and those denied access to their grandchildren.



Back then, there were no resources anywhere for grandparents and, more often than not, the needs of these grandparents were not even considered. The council of grandparents was set up to bring service providers and government departments together with grandparents in need through their support group leaders.

As time progressed the resources available grew slightly, but the lack of true understanding largely continued. Today, we are experiencing a wave of interest which has never been so widespread.

In Queensland our Government has been very proactive in this regard with our status now as "Carers", this advisory role given to QCOGs and Grandparents Day. All of this coming about in the same year, 2010.

All of this gave COGs a new and more formal role and, like any dynamic organisation, it has evolved to keep apace of change. Last month saw the first elections for office bearers and a management committee for COGs together with many other new concepts

The first change you may notice is the "Q" before the word cogs. We are "trying this on for size" and personally, I quite like the sound of Q cogs.

Provisionally approved carers

- Under the *Child Protection Act 1999* a person can be provisionally approved as a foster carer or kinship carer, allowing them to care for a child or young person while their application to be a foster carer or kinship carer is decided.
- This type of approval is usually given to family members or other people already well known to a child or young person to enable an immediate placement to be made.
- Provisional approval is valid for a maximum of 60 days. However, it may be extended for a further 30 days. A provisional approval cannot exceed 90 days.
- It is expected that the carer's application to become an approved foster carer or kinship carer will be finalised during this time.
- To be provisionally approved, a person must be assessed to be suitable to care for a specific child or young person.

Blue cards for carers

A blue card is a card issued by the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian (CCYPCG) and indicates that a person is eligible to work with children and young people in Queensland. By law, all foster and kinship carers and their adult household members are required to hold a blue card.

To determine a person's eligibility to hold a blue card, CCYPCG conducts a 'Working with children check'. This is a detailed national check of a person's criminal history, including any charges or convictions, as well as any disciplinary information held by certain professional organisations. It also includes a police investigation information into allegations of serious child-related sexual offences.

QCOGs Queensland Council of Grandparents

There is more than cosmetics to this change. It is a reflection of the embracement of regional Queensland. Again, our State government has actively supported this by funding the necessary technology to include more distant participants. This is also reflected in the new management team.

President: Maree Lubach..KinKare **Vice Pres:** Nev Abbey..GINOS
Secretary: Sue Black..GAGS **Treasurer:** Lyn O'Brien..Off Our Rockers
PR: John Okello-Okanya...African Seniors/ECCQ
Comm. Members: Janet Goessling ...Nth Qld Cairns & District Grandparents Support Group; Maree Newman...GAGS Gold Coast; Tony Townsend... National Seniors.

Please address all correspondence to

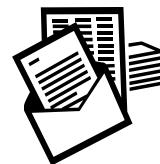
The Secretary QCOGs	Phone	
PO Box 2254	Maree Lubach	3287 1664
Kepperra Qld 4054	Sue Black	0401 969 343

Email: chaircogs@gmail.com

The team now heads into an enormously busy time preparing for Grandparents Day, constitutional consolidation for incorporation, funding applications and new promotional materials including a website.



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.**

Recognition: But Still no Rights

Jon Robins guardian.com.uk Monday 11th April 2011

This month our story comes from the United Kingdom. All around the world, grandparents are facing the same dilemmas as we are. What will it take for the powers that be to wake up and do something more practical?

Six years ago I interviewed Susan Stamper, the grandmother of 10-year-old Isobel May. "I sent her a birthday card to an address in Nottingham that I have, just like I do every year. Every birthday, Christmas and Easter I send her a card without fail. I never miss," she told me. It has now been 13 years since her son split up from Isobel's mother and she still has not seen the girl, who is now 16. Despite the lack of contact, Susan remains a proud grandmother. "But Laura now knows who we are," she tells me. "I have a picture of her from Facebook which is updated from time to time. I do have an idea of what she looks like. She looks remarkably like her dad."

Susan's sad story is not untypical. The Grandparents' Association receives 300 calls a month from grandparents about access to their children's children. It reckons that 280,000 grandparents have no contact at all, and that up to a million children are consequently denied contact with their grandparents.

So the family justice review panel's proposals to streamline the system and bolster the role of grandparents when relationships break up are very welcome. The overarching aim of the Children Act 1989 was to put the interests of the children first – and that usually means maintaining contact with the extended family, including the parents' parents. Unlike estranged parents, who have a right to go to the courts to seek contact with their children, grandparents have to seek the court's permission to do so.

The 14 million grandparents in Britain play a vital economic role – according to another charity, Grandparents Plus, they provide childcare worth £3.9bn every year. That contribution receives little formal recognition, although this month grandparents who care for a child will be able to claim a credit towards their state pension. Grandparents Plus has called for working grandparents to be entitled to two weeks of "granny leave" after the birth of a grandchild, as well as flexible working arrangements.

Some grandparents choose to (or feel they must) step in after family catastrophe such as a death or divorce, or drink and drug problems: about 200,000 grandparents provide sole care for their grandchildren. But only foster carers are entitled to state support, and according to the Family Rights Group only a very small minority of these grandparents are recognised as such. By the end of September local authorities will have to publish their policies in this area as a result of last month's new Family and Friends Care guidance.

So the family justice review does well to recognise a section of the community that is too often overlooked. But it does not, as some of the press coverage suggested, propose giving grandparents legal rights. The law is "too blunt an instrument", said the author of the report, David Norgrove. ("Just as 'contact' is not a right of the parents but of the child, grandparents do not have a right to 'contact'," his report says). Instead, the idea is for couples to sign up to Parenting Agreements that set out explicitly how children will continue to maintain contact with grandparents and siblings.

In particular, the proposals mean that grandparents may still have to apply to a court for permission to see their grandchildren. The review panel remained unconvinced that the courts were unreasonably refusing grandparents leave, or that the process was slow or expensive. Instead, they concluded that the hurdle helped weed out "hopeless or vexatious applications".

Tanya Roberts, a family law partner at Charles Russell LLP, advises grandparents on contact rights, and welcomes the proposals as a "positive contribution". But she isn't convinced that applying to court is usually necessary. "From my experience, I haven't found that grandparents want to make these applications except for genuine reasons. They think very long and hard about them." Applying to the court, if a lawyer is instructed, can be "a very costly exercise, emotionally and money wise".

But as Roberts points out, the proposals might make little practical difference in difficult cases. "If one party, for reasons genuine or not, doesn't want the grandparent involved they are still left with having to make an application. The ones who are keen for grandma to be involved will continue to be involved."

Jon Robins is a freelance journalist and director of the research company Jures, which is running the Justice Gap series looking at different aspects of justice.

Laughter is the best Medicine

A little old lady was sitting on a park bench in The Sun Lakes, an Arizona Adult Community. A man walked over and sat on the other end of the bench. After a few moments, the woman asked, 'Are you a stranger here?'

He replied: 'I lived here years ago.'

'So, where were you all these years?'

'In prison,' he said.

'Why did they put you in prison?' she asked.

He looked at her and, very quietly, said, 'I killed my wife.'

'Oh,' said the woman, 'so you're single?'

QUIET SEX

Tired of a listless sex life, the man came right out and asked his wife During a recent lovemaking session, 'How come you never tell me when you have an orgasm?' She glanced at him and replied, 'You're never home!'

WOMEN'S HUMOROUS SEX

My husband came home with a tube of K Y jelly and said, 'This will make you happy tonight.' He was right. When he went out of the bedroom, I squirted it all over the doorknobs and he couldn't get back in.

Two elderly people living in Apache Junction (he was a widower, she was a widow) had known each other for a number of years. One evening there was a community supper in the big arena at the Clubhouse.

The two were at the same table, across from one another. As the meal went on, he took a few admiring glances at her and finally gathered the courage to ask her, 'Will you marry me?'

After about 6 seconds of careful consideration she said, 'Yes. Yes, I will.'

The meal ended and, with a few more pleasant exchanges, they went to their respective places.

Next morning he was troubled. Did she say 'yes' or did she say 'no'? Try as he might, he just could not recall. Not even a faint memory. In trepidation, he went to the phone and called her.

First he explained that he didn't remember as well as he used to. Then he reviewed the lovely evening past. As he gained a little more courage, he inquired, 'When I asked if you would marry me, did you say "yes" or did you say "no"?'

He was delighted to hear her say, 'Why, I said "Yes. Yes I will" and I meant it with all my heart.' Then she continued, 'And I am so glad that you called, because I couldn't remember who had asked me.'

LOUD SEX

A wife went in to see a therapist and said, 'I've got a big problem, doctor. Every time we're in bed and my husband climaxes, He lets out this ear splitting yell.' 'My dear,' the shrink said, 'that's completely natural. I don't see what the problem is.'

ELDERLY SEX

One night, an 87 year-old woman came home from Bingo and found her 92 year-old husband in bed with another woman.

She became violent and ended up pushing him off the balcony of their 20th floor, assisted living apartment, killing him instantly. Brought before the court on the charge of murder, the judge asked her if she had anything to say in her defence. She began coolly, 'Yes, your honour. I figured that at 92, if he could have sex... he could also fly.'

See
Ya



Growing Old Disgracefully

CONFOUNDED SEX

A man was in a terrible accident, and his 'manhood' was mangled and torn from his body. His doctor assured him that modern medicine could give him back his manhood, but that his insurance wouldn't cover the surgery since it was considered cosmetic.

The doctor said the cost would be \$3,500 for 'small', \$6,500 for 'medium', and \$14,000 for 'large.'

The man was sure he would want a medium or large, but the doctor urged him To talk it over with his wife before he made any decision.

The man called his wife on the phone and explained their options.

The doctor came back into the room, and found the man looking dejected.

'Well, what have the two of you decided?' asked the doctor.

The man replied 'She'd rather have a new kitchen.'

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY SEX

A husband and his wife had a bitter quarrel on the day of their 40th wedding anniversary. The husband yelled, 'When you die, I'm getting You a headstone that reads: 'Here Lies My Wife - Cold As Ever!'. 'Yeah,' she replies, 'when you die, I'm getting you a headstone that reads: 'Here Lies My Husband - Stiff At Last.'



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.