



"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 2010

www.kinkare.com.au



Editorial

Hello Everyone,

The year is quickly passing. Now that we have put Mother's Day behind us, we will soon be saying half of 2010 is over! Winter seems to be finally showing its colours. If you have any need of blankets or warmer clothing make sure you contact us.

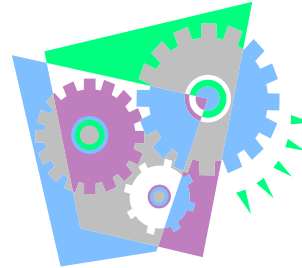
This month I am appealing for people to help run some of the KinKare groups as the number of other projects on the go has really grown. The duties are not great. Mainly it is a matter of promoting the group and attending the meetings. I will be in constant touch with you to keep you up to date on the news as it happens. I have already had offers for four of the groups and I am now looking for helpers in the Inala and Goodna groups which I am going to amalgamate. It is also becoming too expensive for me to travel so far for so few people. They are geographically very close, but meet on different days.

Currently, there are a number of Seniors "Expos" being held. (KinKare will be displaying at the Arundel one.) So please keep an eye open for the ones in your area and support them as Seniors issues have not been given the priority they deserve. **These exhibitions are just the place to tell you local politician about your needs and highlight grandparents issues.**

For local grandparents, Dr Sally Frye has gone into private practice and welcomes any grandparents who need her services. Remember there is allowance now for some visits to be billed to Medicare. Dr Ron Frey is researching a self-help type book which will be similar to Sally's but covering different problems.

KinKare is continuing to work with COGs and the Soroptimists in their advocacy roles as well as in its own right and the National Body steering committee is very close to being declared. As you can see, it is a very busy and exciting time for us all.

Happy reading,
Maree



COGs Council of Grandparents

By Tracey Douglas (Chair of COGs.)

The Council of Grandparents has been gathering its wits together after last November's conference. As the conference was not issue based, **all the material from it has been in presentation form which has taken a long time to condense into a readable document.** Instead of doing a large document I am planning to put together a series of smaller documents based on information from the conference on various models etc and they should be **available by email next month.** I am looking at a cheap way to get them printed to send to people without email as well so if you let Maree know if you fall into this category I will get an idea of how many copies we will need.

In addition the Council received some funding to produce a small booklet on grandparenting in Queensland. The book is finished and I am just finalising the printing options for it as well so we can make it available at no cost to grandparents and others who are interested. It is intended to reflect the social changes over 150 years in Queensland as part of the 150 years celebrations in 2009.

Maree has been working on the National Body development stuff for the Council and grandparents and it is almost ready to move onto the next stage.* The Council will be discussing how it fits into the Body later in the year. **Members from the Council have met with the Minister for Child Safety** and discussed how we can assist the Minister by becoming **an advisory point for both Ministers dealing with issues for grandparents.** The first meeting for this will be happening in early June so we will keep you updated.

A couple of thank yous to special people - first to Neville Abbey and the good work he has put into grandparent support in Townsville and points north and also to Damien Te Whiu from COTAQ who has become very ill and has now left employment. He has been a great supporter of the Council since its inception and will be missed by everyone who has worked with him.

*This statement is reported "as written". KinKare does not totally agree with this viewpoint as there was very little support given to the national body by COGs.

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The Court said What??



Topic: Ability of parents to move and settle many kms away after divorce and access of grandparents after the event.

Brief Background: The mother moved from China to be with relatives in NZ. She met and married moving to Sydney. Both parents were degreed and owned several properties. The mother sponsored the paternal grandparents to relocate from China to assist with the child when born. For a while after the birth, the paternal grandparents did just that but were asked to leave that property to make way for the maternal grandmother. Dad had business dealings in China which required him to spend weeks/months there at a time. Shortly after the birth of the child the marriage fell apart and at the time of the Court case the child was just over 2 years old. Mum was allowed to live in NZ with conditions.

I think you will find some of the comments made by the judge enlightening which is why I have chosen this particular case. These comments are listed below, but **I encourage you to read the full transcript before relating it to your situation.**

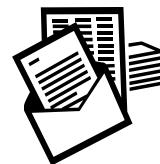


Please note: For your information, I have particularly included comments beginning with the words "I am required"

- I am required to consider the benefits to the child of having a meaningful relationship with both of the parents. This is an important matter. The Mother agrees that there is a benefit to the child in having a meaningful relationship with **both her parents and with extended family on both sides.**
- **I am required to consider any views expressed by the child** and any factors, such as the maturity or level of understanding of the child, that I think are relevant to the weight I should give to the views of the child. [Section 60CD](#) sets out how I may inform myself of views expressed by a child. However, I am not permitted to require a child to express views in relation to any matter: see [s 60CE](#).
- I am required to consider the nature of the relationship of the child with each of the parents and other persons **including any grandparent** or other relative of the child.
- The Mother submitted **that the child has a secure attachment** to her, a very limited relationship with her father, **a close relationship with her paternal grandparents**, especially her paternal grandmother **and the maternal grandparents**, especially the maternal grandmother.
- I agree with what the Mother submitted except that I am unable to form any independent view about the relationship of the child and the maternal grandparents. However **the concern is the development and maintenance of the relationship of the child with the Father and the paternal grandparents.**
- I have no doubt that if the child continued to reside in Sydney then there would be greater opportunity for the Father **and in particular the paternal grandparents** to be involved with the child than if the child resided in Christchurch.
- **I am required to consider the likely effect of any changes in the circumstances of the child** including the likely effect on the child of any separation from either parent or any other child or other person **including any grandparent** or other relative of the child, with whom the child has been living. This is an important matter.
- **The Mother's case is that this detriment would be outweighed by the benefit of having regular supportive time with the whole extended maternal family in New Zealand.**
- I have no doubt that if the child resided in Sydney she would have far greater opportunity to spend time with the Father and the paternal grandparents. **In the event that the child resided in New Zealand then there would be an effect on the child of separation from the Father and the paternal grandparents and this was explained by the Family Consultant.**
- I am required to consider the capacity of each of the parents and any other person **including any grandparent** or other relative to provide for the needs of the child, including emotional and intellectual needs. This is an important matter
- I am required to consider any family violence involving the child or a member of the child's family. I am also required to consider any family violence order that applies to the child or a member of the child's family if the order is a final order or the making of the order was contested by a person. The term "family violence order" is defined in s 4 of the Act to mean an order including an interim order made under a prescribed law of a State or Territory to protect a person from family violence. The parties to the proceedings must inform me of any family violence order if they are aware that a family violence order applies to the child or a member of the child's family. **In considering what order to make I must to the extent that it is possible to do so consistently with the best interests of the child being the paramount consideration ensure that any parenting order is consistent with any family violence order and does not expose a person to an unacceptable risk of family violence: s 60CG(1).** I may also include in any order any safeguards that I consider necessary for the safety of those affected by the order.
- I am required to consider whether it would be preferable to make **the order that would be least likely to lead to the institution of further proceedings in relation to the child.**
- in my view, ultimately in this case, it comes down to the concerns I have about the effect on the child of residing in Christchurch and thus spending less frequent time with the Father and the paternal grandparents balanced against the obvious enhancement of the ability of the Mother to care for the child if the Mother and the child reside in Christchurch.
- As I have already noted **the Family Consultant said the physical and mental health of the Mother as the child's primary caregiver is fundamental to the child's well-being and optimal development.** I accept the opinion of the Family Consultant that if the child relocated with her mother, she would benefit from having her mother more available to her both physically and emotionally.



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.

This month's story is one I received from a grandfather I know very well. He has given me his name but it will not be published for privacy's sake. There are two parts to it..

A "longitudinal study" in some ways!

May 2003

Once upon a time there was a married couple toiling happily to provide a good future for their two children. The world was their oyster. Then they retired and looked really forward to a holiday here or there and to live happily ever after.

Nice story—but unfortunately just a fairy tale!

All of a sudden they are parenting again! Circumstances beyond their control gave them a child. The youngest of five (5) grandchildren, just 6 years old, then.

Here they go—rearrange their life. Join fund raising committees, sporting activities, homework supervision, P&C meetings, working bees, and have quality time with the child.

They meet and make friends with quite a number of young parents but they lose old friends, because they have to think young again.

Even a daytime BBQ can be a hassle if no other children are there. It's not easy for the three to fit in somewhere. But love and affection make up for a lot of things which go missing—like holiday specials for pensioners, which don't fit in with school holidays, nights out for dinner somewhere, a bit of night time fishing or an evening at the RSL club or even the theatre.

But there is a mission, to give a child a nice and stable childhood, who after all is a family member. The two senior citizens have really something to do. So it is another tale with a happy ending all round.

Actually it may be a fairy tale with a not so happy ending. The couple tried during their working to be self sufficient in retirement, so they receive only a part pension. The people who govern decide they have too much savings and assets to get the full pension. Now, they get to raise

the child with the prescribed financial benefits.

An authority on family affairs estimated the cost of child rearing at \$102,000—in all. The grandparents/carers can make the child a ward of the State by giving the child away. The next step is to try to get it back as a foster child to get foster carer's benefits.

So they happily spend their life savings on a very happy grandchild.

End of Story 2003



Story 2010

The immutable doctrine of the Social Security Act allows foster carers allowance to be paid only to approved foster carers, indigenous kinship carers, grandparents who care for a mentally or physically impaired grandchild or the child is under a restraining order.*

Our granddaughter is now 13, healthy of mind and body, loves to learn, attends a private school, plays netball in the rep team, belongs to a swim squad where she just won the yearly award for best performer, plays in the school band, the clarinet.

The three of us are a really busy family, my wife (72) and I (75) are sure not bored senior citizens.

But the life savings are disappearing fast. The world wide crash on the money market hurt us badly.

Financial help is needed, but where from? Mortgage the place?

End of Story 2010

*** Editors note: This is "as written" by the grandparent. The foster carers allowance to paid to ALL carers when a child, in need of protection, is "placed" with ANY carers by the State Government. Carers Allowance and Payment is paid by the Federal Government to carers of children with a diagnosed disability which may be additional to those quoted. Please check eligibility for your own circumstance.**

Laughter is the best Medicine



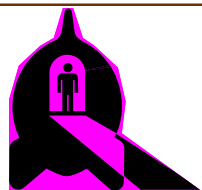
The four Goldberg brothers, Lowell, Norman, Hiram, & Max, invented & developed the first automobile air-conditioner. On July 17 1946, the temperature in Detroit was 97 degrees.

The four brothers walked into old man Henry Ford's office and sweet talked his secretary into telling him that four gentleman were there with the most exciting innovation in the auto industry since the electric starter.

Henry was curious and invited them into his office. They refused and instead asked that he come out to the parking lot to their car. They persuaded him to get into the car which was about 130 degrees, turned on the air conditioner, and cooled the car off immediately. The old man got very excited and invited them back to the office, where he offered them \$3 million for the patent.

The brothers refused, saying they would settle for \$2 million but they wanted recognition by having a label, 'The Goldberg Air-Conditioner,' on the dashboard of each car in which it was installed. Now old man Ford was more than just a little anti-semitic, and there was no way he was going to put the Goldberg's name on two million Fords.

They haggled back and fourth for about two hours and finally agreed on \$4 million and that just their first names would be shown. And so to this day, all Ford air-conditioners show...**Lo, Norm, Hi and Max on the controls.**



Urgent Warning Aliens are Coming

Their mission is to abduct all good looking and "sexy" old people!

Don't worry though, you will be alright!

I am just saying goodbye!



A BEAUTIFUL MESSAGE ABOUT GROWING OLD:



Damn! ... I forgot what it was....

Two Crocodiles were sitting at the side of Lake Burley Griffin in Canberra . The smaller one turned to the bigger one and said, 'I can't understand how you can be so much bigger than me. We're the same age, we were the same size as kids. I just don't get it



'Well,' said the big Croc, 'what have you been eating?

'Politicians, same as you,' replied the small Croc.

'Hmm. Well, where do you catch them?



Down the other side of the lake near the parking lot by the Parliament House. 'Same here.

Hmm.....How do you catch them?

"Well, I crawl up under one of their Lexus cars and wait for one to unlock the car door.

Then I jump out, grab them by the leg, shake the shit out of them and eat 'em!

Ah!' says the big Crocodile, 'I think I see your problem. You're not getting any real nourishment.

See, by the time you finish shaking the shit out of a Politician, there's nothing left but an asshole and a briefcase



Meeting Notices



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

Goodna:

Place: Neighbourhood House, 33 Queens St
Day/Time: 3rd Monday of the month 10:30am
Contact: Maree ☎ 3287 1664

Inala:

Place: The Hub, Corsair Ave
Day/Time: 2nd Tuesday of the month 10:30am
Contact: Maree ☎ 3287 1664

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

WELCOME to our newest group!

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: ☎ 5437 9499

Indigenous G'parent Support Group:

Place: Centrecare
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 Tuesday of the month 9:30am-11:30am
Contact: Nicole or Kirsty ☎ (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 (grand)children.

Community Legal Centres

The national website is www.naclc.org.au

or for Queensland, see www.qacls.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.