

MONTHLY NEWS



Editorial

Hi Everyone,
Welcome to 2008. Another busy year is looming!
I hope you had a very special holiday break and are ready for the year ahead.

I have heard that there are some changes likely to the Family Tax Benefit re shared parenting and, at this stage, am still tracking them down.

There is information re changes from the Child Support Agency printed later in the newsletter.

We are addressing a Senate Enquiry (Feb 8th) re the financial problems of older Australians and, of course, grandparents are right up there.

I had a very with positive meeting Brian Smith from FCQ over the holidays and a report follows.

There is also some preliminary work on a new project from SEL, but more will follow in later newsletters. Their information booklet, written by the psychologists attending the camps, is in its final stages so look for a launch date in the next couple of issues. It is very exciting.

COGs resumes on the first Monday of each month and all support group leaders and service providers are encouraged to attend. (Please ring Tracey 5596 5523 or me for details.)

Once again, we have a lot of new people joining our newsletter recipient list and I felt it timely to include an article about KinKare and support groups in general: what we do and what we offer etc.

Please remember, we are always happy to hear feedback from you in order to keep our newsletter relevant and useful

Our meetings start again this month so I hope to see you there.

My love and best wishes as always,
Maree



KINKARE

What we do and What we offer.

KinKare is a support group. Our main aim is to help you personally through the ups and downs of your personal situation.

We do this by organizing meetings so that you can be in contact with others going through similar problems, providing you with information and talking to politicians on your behalf.

The meetings are the most important thing we do because knowing you are not alone, or have two heads, is VERY important. At these meetings you will find other people going through very similar circumstances. Some will have been doing it for much longer and have possible solutions to your problems and others will be like you. All have a lot of experience to assist you along the way.

As all the many, diverse problems grandparents go through cannot be handled by just one organization, KinKare aims to give you guidance as to the best people to be in touch with for your particular needs.

This might be for legal issues, benefits or dealing with child protection people. We refer you to those who are knowledgeable in these areas. We do not provide the service, but can point you in the right direction.

I have spoken many times in this newsletter about the ability of different services to adequately address grandparenting issues. And keeping track of those who do it well is what we try to do. (Which is why your feedback is so important.)

An obvious example is that if you have a family law issue going to a criminal law specialist may not work. No matter how good this person is, they need to specialize in your particular area. There are very few professionals who truly understand grandparent's issues. (This includes those denied access as well, as they are the hardest to find good help for.)

Recently, there have been just a handful of professionals who have begun to understand grandparents.

We are now beginning, with your feedback, to get a resource list together to assist you well.

It is still limited but growing. Hence our need to lobby governments for assistance to create more awareness of the grandparenting situation.



MEETING DATES

Please call first as many groups do not meet in school holidays

KinKare EAGLEBY

Meets the second Friday of each month @10:30am, Eagleby Community Centre
Ph Maree 3287 1664

KinKare NERANG

Meets the fourth Wednesday of the month @12:00
Nerang Neighbourhood Ctr
Ph Maree 3287 1664

SUNSHINE COAST KinKare

Meets the Second Wednesday of the month 9:30am@ the Salvation Army Hall Maroochydore
Phone: Lynne: 5444 6270

KinKare INALA

Meets 2nd Tuesday of the month @ 10:30am
We are trying to get this meeting happening again so please let us know if you are planning to attend. It is quite expensive for me to go only to find no-one there.
Ph Maree 3287 1664.

KinKare GLADSTONE

Please contact Pauline
Ph (07) 4978 0501

KinKare WARWICK

Meets 2nd Friday of the month 10 am
Ring Jo at Mercy Services 4635 8600

ZILLMERE & SOUTHBANK

Indigenous Grandparent Support Group

Meets twice monthly
Please ring Tess Ph 3252 4371

Grandparents As Parents

Community Solutions Inc.

Sunshine Coast and Wide Bay

Please phone Donna 5477 5955

CAIRNS & DISTRICT

G'parents Support Group

Meets the first Wednesday of each month @9:30am,
Hambledon House Community Centre, Edmonton
Ph Janet or John (07) 40 555 161
Email johnjan@cairns.net.au

TOWNSVILLE region

Nth Q'ld G'parents in Need of Support

(GINOS)

For details of this group, please contact
Ph. Nev (07) 4723 3520
Email trcota@bigpond.net.au

Please Note: Updated phone number

Group Meetings

For those who would like their meetings placed in this column, just drop me an email or letter and I would be only too pleased to spread the word.

There is no requirement to be a KinKare group.

Newsletter Items

Just another reminder to all groups, the **newsletter articles are for distribution** to any relative carers. Don't hesitate to pass on the newsletter in its entirety or relevant articles as you see fit. The only thing we ask is that the intent/content of the article is not compromised.

Please Note

All contributions to the newsletter are gratefully accepted.

Please email them to me for transfer to the newsletter.

If you need someone to chat to, we are always happy to hear from you.

Phone Danni 3299 1764

or Maree 3287 1664, or your local support group leader



KinKare and FCQ

When KinKare first began, Linda Smith from FCQ was very happy to come along and address our meeting. Hence I came to know Brian and we all seemed to have the same objectives for our different organizations.

Since then, even though we live within a stones throw of one another, we seem only to have crossed paths at meetings. This year we finally found the time to get together and discuss some important issues.

We found that through all the changes our organizations had experienced our main aims and objectives were still the same and still our priority. **We realized that the initial bond between our organizations was still there.**

We don't deny there have been some hiccoughs along the way but we have found we can both streamline our procedures to overcome these.

One of the most important things we realized was that we both had similar issues that we were championing. Together we present a greater number of people and therefore have greater bargaining power.

I truly believe that this strengthened alliance can only benefit relative carers or kinship carers as we are now called.



COGs

During 2007 the Council of Grandparents received some **funding to undertake a study into the history of grandparents** and grandparenting in Queensland over the past 150 years to be made into a book for release in June 2009 as part of the Q150 celebrations.

Tracey Douglas is doing this work for us and is seeking stories and any information that you think would be appropriate to consider for inclusion. Information can be sent to her by email to tadcom@austarnet.com.au or by mail to PO Box 3162 Nerang East 4211.

Tracey has a Masters degree from the University of Queensland with a focus on history so she is well equipped to undertake this work. She is particularly looking for stories about grandparents' grandparents who were among the early settlers as well as new arrivals whose grandparents are or were on the other side of the world.



Child Support Agency

Do you have care of your grandkids?

You may be eligible for Child Support

If you have care of grandchild/ren who are under the age of eighteen you can receive child support from one or both parents of the children if you apply to CSA for a child support assessment. Non-parent carers, including grandparents, usually apply for child support from both parents.

The new Child Support Scheme

From 1 July 2008 the Child Support Scheme will change. The new Scheme uses a different way to work out child support based on the costs of bringing up children. Under the new Scheme there will be some changes to the way child support is assessed for non-parent carers.

Child support will still be worked out using both parents' incomes, cost percentages and child support percentages – similar to how it is worked out for parents. This helps ensure that both parents contribute to the ongoing costs of raising their children. The amount of care each parent has will also be taken into account.

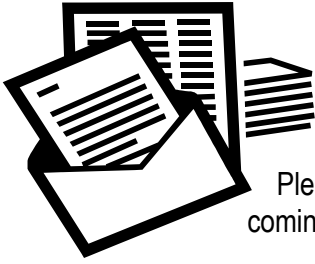
However only the non-parent carer's cost percentage, based on your percentage of care for the child/ren, is relevant to working out how much child support is payable. Your income is not taken into account. Your percentage of care is based on the number of nights you have care of the child.

If you are a grandparent carer with significant regular daytime caring responsibilities and no night time responsibilities, CSA recommends you and the parent(s) make a parenting plan and provide a copy to CSA. The plan, which will outline how much time the child will be in your care and your care percentage, will ensure your arrangement is recognised for child support purposes.

For more information

For more information about CSA or how the new Scheme will affect grandparents and other non-parent carers call **131 272** or visit our website www.csa.gov.au





Our Personal Page

Please keep these wonderful articles coming. This one really touched me.

There's a Child in My House.

I'm old, I'm cranky, I'm lonely I'm me.
 She's young, she's smiley, she's friendly, she's she.
 I cook, I clean, I wash, I drive.
 She eats, she plays, she keeps me alive.
 I listen, I teach, I worry, I weep,
 She yells, she learns, she kisses my cheek.

I pray and I wonder, I try to stay calm.
 She talks, she draws, then speaks of the harm.
 I'm old, she's young, I aim and she follows.
 A child with a past that no grown up could swallow.

I'm slashing my way through a jungle of trouble,
 I've done it before, but this time it's double.
 She heads two steps forward and then travels back,
 So I have to try harder to get her on track.

I'll never give up, though I moan and I utter
 The most terrible things that would make others shudder.
 She has ups and downs, she has thoughts in her head.
 She dreams of bad people and climbs into my bed.
 She's angry, she's curious, and definitely smart,
 She's funny and innocent, she loves apple tart.

Dogs are her favourite, she likes big ones the best,
 She bosses them, chases them, loves them to death.
 She gardens and gathers rocks, leaves and weeds,
 She plays on the back "randa" with pretend cups of tea.

She kicks a mean ball, loves cousins and parks,
 Friends and her preschool, uncles and aunts.
 She scrapbooks, she swims, she dances and sings.
 Why do some people do horrible things?

I don't mind her here, and it isn't her fault,
 That her life has been scrambled without any thought.
 It's just at my age, it's generally said,
 That 5 yr old children don't jump in your bed.

In the dead of the night when you're sleeping so soundly,
 A sweet little voice says quite profoundly,
 Can I come to you Grandma, my dream woke me up?
 And I slowly move over as she climbs her way up.
 She brings in her pillow, she brings teddy too.
 I'm lucky she doesn't bring all of her Zoo.
 Then two seconds later, she's quiet as a mouse,
 And we sleep till the daylight lights up the whole house.

I can't let her down though, she needs to know trust,
 She needs guidance and comfort, and care is a must.
 I'll always be grumpy, I'll always be me.
 She'll always be precious, she'll always be she.

If I have my way, she'll learn all that is good,
 She'll sing through her life, like a 5 yr old should.
 She'll be confident, smart, she'll not look behind,
 After all she's my grandchild, she's one of a kind.

Written at midnight - July 2006



Laughter is the Best Medicine!

This is the best exercise I have ever seen. It really works.

EXERCISE FOR PEOPLE OVER 40:

Begin by standing on a comfortable surface, where you have plenty of room at each side. With a 5-lb potato sack in each hand, extend your arms straight out from your sides and hold them there as long as you can.

Try to reach a full minute, and then relax. Each day you'll find that you can hold this position for just a bit longer.

After a couple of weeks, move up to 10-lb potato sacks.

Then try 50-lb potato sacks and then eventually try to get to where you can lift a 100-lb potato sack in each hand and hold your arms straight for more than a full minute.

(I'm at this level.)

After you feel confident at that level, put a potato in each of the sacks.