

MONTHLY NEWS



Editorial

Hi Everyone,

Easter is here and we hope you all enjoy the holiday break even though it looks as though we are going to get plenty of rain.

I want to remind you about **Marilyn's petition**. She is very excited about the response so far and the time is open for this so keep collecting those names.

Her address again:

Marilyn Rudd

Post Office Box 1577

Wollongong NSW 2500

The federal Government has introduced an **Education Tax Refund initiative** which allows you to claim refunds on some school costs. A more detailed article follows later in the newsletter.

The **Seniors Enquiry Line** has notified us of a great **Peer Skills** programme they are running to help grandparents support one another better and further details also follow.

If you have contact with a **Family Relationship Centre** you will probably have noticed their increased interest in assisting grandparents.

Don't forget our **Soroptimist** picnic for Kinship carers **May 3rd @ Logan River Parklands**, 11am.

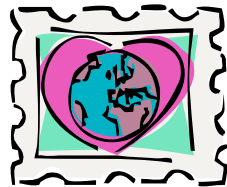
Hoping to see many of you there,

Love,

Maree



Stamps Please



Yes we are still collecting!

A reminder to all that our local Rotary club collects used stamps to help pay for containers which are help to ship aid packages abroad.

Please save yours and send them to me.

Many thanks to those who regularly collect.



Some information about the educational tax benefit. It does not specify how they define a carer. There are also limits to the amounts payable. Please **let me know if your circumstances**, other than those they mention, **exclude you** from this benefit. It is important for me to bring that to their attention



Australian Taxation Office

The **Education Tax Refund (ETR)** is a new government initiative to help with the cost of educating primary and secondary school children. It means eligible parents, **carers, legal guardians** and independent students could get 50% back on some education expenses. This includes items like computers, educational software, textbooks and stationery.

Most people are eligible for the ETR because they receive Family Tax Benefit (FTB) Part A. However, there are some payments that prevent you from receiving FTB Part A, but which still entitle you to receive the refund. You can also claim the refund if you are an independent student. For more information, see [Am I eligible?](#)

You can claim the ETR each financial year for children in primary and/or secondary school, or if you are an independent student. You will be able to claim the refund from 1 July 2009 for the 2008/09 financial year. This means you can claim for items purchased from 1 July 2008. Remember to **keep your receipts** as they will help you calculate your entitlement and you may be required to produce them as proof of purchase.

You can claim the ETR even if you are not required to lodge a tax return. For more information, see [How do I claim?](#)

For more information the link is:

<http://ato.gov.au/individuals/content.asp?doc=/content/00174278.htm&page=14&H14>

Phone 13 28 61



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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 @12:30pm
Nerang Neighbourhood Ctr
Ph Maree 3287 1664

SUNSHINE COAST KinKare

This group now meets with Community Solutions.
Please see below

KinKare INALA

Meets 2nd Tuesday of the month @ 10:30am,
The Hub, Corsair Ave
Ph Maree 3287 1664.

KinKare CLEVELAND

Meets 3rd Friday of the month @ 10:30am
The Donald Simpson Centre
Ph Maree 3287 1664 or Maged 3207 7200

KinKare BEAUDESERT

Meets 4th Friday of the month @10:30am
Beaucare, 44 Tina St
Ph Michelle 5541 3290

KinKare GOODNA

Starts on November 17th 10:30am
Neighbourhood House 33 Queens St
PH Maree 3287 1664

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 Sharon 5437 9499

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 johnjanet@internode.on.net

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

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Granpower

www.granpower.org.au

For details Ph Suz 0409 294 231
PO Box 172 Cannington WA 6987

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

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.

***We are considering going to a PDF
format. Please advise if this will not suit
you.***

Please Note

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.

Media Praised

"The Drug Scourge"

The **Courier Mail** and, in particular, **journalists Matt and Michael** who put together this set of articles are to be highly praised indeed.

KinKare was so pleased to be able to contribute in some way to this **well researched set of articles** which has appeared recently. **There are too many myths and misconceptions regarding drug involvement by our children. (No matter their age.)**

The articles were focused on methamphetamines such as speed, ecstasy and ice, but the implications and effects of drug abuse are universal.

I really hope the following information helps you to understand your own circumstances and make you realize you are not alone or to blame. Too many times **the parents of abusers are branded** as responsible when, in many instances, that is not the case.

The set of articles covers almost every angle of the topic and there is no way I can reduce them and still keep the intention of each one intact. I am therefore going to quote **some relevant parts** of each. I hope I will be forgiven for my version of the essential parts

I urge you to request a copy of these from the Courier Mail. It is a most enlightening insight.

The following excerpts are not necessarily connected.

Statistics first:

Australia is the **largest per capita consumer of ecstasy** in the world according to the UN's 2008 World Drug Report, which puts our consumption ahead of the Czech Republic, New Zealand, the UK, Estonia, Hungary, Canada and the US.

In the 2007 National Drug Strategy Household Survey, a record 608,400 Australians – aged 14 or more (3.5 per cent of the population) – admitted to taking the psychoactive drug in the preceding 12 months.

Queensland Chief Justice Paul de Jersey says drug abuse has become "emblematic of large parts of trendy young society".

"But," he adds, **"the extent of the phenomenon is not limited by age or social barrier.**

Initially shell-shocked by the chaos surrounding her daughter's "speed" addiction, grandmother Sue recalls a drug counsellor's empathy. "She said to me, **'Do you know that one drug addict directly or indirectly affects 75 people?'**"

Queensland Health records show that in 2007, **159** infants were born with "neonatal withdrawal symptoms" as a result of their mothers' drug addiction.

Ten years ago, the number was 89.



Effects:

Methamphetamine mimics adrenaline by stimulating the central nervous system, boosting energy and often leading to **acute psychosis marked by paranoia and rage**, says Royal Brisbane Hospital addiction psychiatrist Mark Daglish. University of Adelaide Associate Professor of Pharmacology Rod Irvine said **the drug could lead to a generation gripped by early onset of serotonin-depletion diseases such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's.**

He said the liver struggled to excrete MDMA from the body after as little as one pill.

Memory and cognitive harm, and depression...were commonly reported by weekend ecstasy users.

"But in the US, tests on monkeys who have been exposed (to ecstasy) and then left drug-free for years, when you examine their brains, they've still got this loss of serotonin," Professor Irvine said.

"Even if there is recovery (in the long-term), it's very slow and the brain doesn't make the same connections.

So it's unlikely that you're going to have the same functionality as what you had before."

According to the 2008 Ecstasy and Related Drugs Reporting System, an average Queensland user is 24 and employed. **One in every two has tertiary qualifications,** and typically, two pills are "dropped" every fortnight.

Testimonial from a user (abridged)

Paul, **41, is well-dressed, articulate and friendly,** but his eyes have a haunted look and appear tired, with deep dark lines underneath.

"It (drugs) doesn't discriminate," he says. "I mean, rich, poor - there's no difference."

Paul says **he felt no remorse during those years and would lie to everyone including his parents**

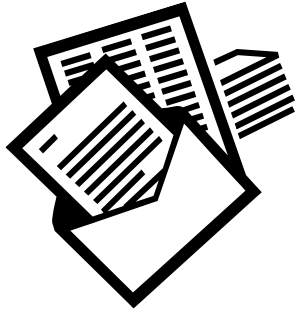
"They'd say, 'just stop, your life's falling apart around you, just stop it. We love you, please just stop it'.

"And your heart's going 'yes I see what you mean, it's broken through my denial. Yes, I will stop, yes I do want to stop with all my heart. I do want to stop'.

"But you just can't, the next day or the next three days, it would be like, 'well maybe I can just have a sip, or have a beer, or maybe the problem was pot or maybe the problem was smack'."

FOR many Queenslanders, it's viewed as a problem that affects only our young and reckless. But so-called party drugs are a curse on many more than Generation Next.

From the warmth of family homes to the chill of prison cells; from flashy nightclubs to sterile hospital wards, the drug curse is reaching further into the state every day



Our Personal Page



Laughter is the Best Medicine

I mentioned in the last article that KinKare was so very pleased to assist with the fabulous set of articles written by Matt and Michael recently in *The Courier Mail*. I did not, however, include the article about the effects on grandparents. I am placing it in this more personal spot for us with my deepest thanks to the grandparents involved. Of course names have been changed.

When Sue, 63, watches over her two grandchildren, she feels joy, protectiveness - and a cautious optimism.

But if she lets her mind drift beyond the soft pink faces to her own daughter's childhood, she gives herself a mental kick.

"Their mother was a lovely, helpful, gorgeous little girl," she says, "and it would be very easy to become melancholy. But I won't go there. If I go down in a heap, who's going to look after them?"

"No," she says, her voice rising, "when you hear your child is on drugs, it is the most gut-wrenching thing. But when you know there are two beautiful children involved, it beggars belief. How could anyone do that?"

In December 2004, following the protracted involvement of police, child safety workers and the courts, Sue and her husband Bill were granted permanent guardianship of Hayley, 13 and Anna, 6.

The girls' mother - Sue and Bill's middle child, 38-year-old Mia - is, or has been, addicted to marijuana, speed and alcohol. With the little contact they have these days, Sue says she's never exactly sure where on the gauge of drug abuse Mia is pointed.

However, she's come to expect the worst.

The Brisbane southside couple are among hundreds of Queensland grandparents, all with drug-addicted children, who are definitely not living the extolled superannuants' dream.

But pushing retirement back to raise a family a second time around has its own rewards. In any case, it's far preferable to the nightmare that went immediately before.

A timely warning for Easter

DO YOU EAT CADBURY'S CHOCOLATES? We were raised on CADBURY'S chocolate as kids and even into adulthood.

THIS IS A MEDICAL WARNING!

It could happen to you, your family and friends!



CADBURY'S Chocolate can cause SMALL FEET!!

