

MONTHLY NEWS



Editorial

Hi Everyone,
Halfway through another year and winter has hit with a vengeance!

Once again, I had computer problems just when I didn't need them! However, I am going again! It seems with all the new building across the road, surges are not uncommon.

We were extremely disappointed to **have missed out on the round of funding** we were so optimistic about. We need your help now and a plea appears later in the newsletter detailing the small contributions you can make which would help so much.

My love and best wishes as always,
Maree



Holiday Activities

I have had enquiries about entertainment for the kids during the school holidays. I have listed some places where you may find information.

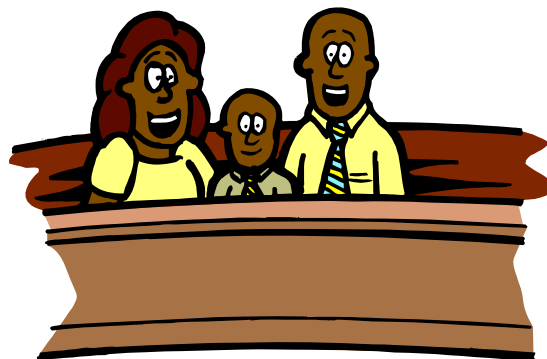
I have found a website which seems good as well; www.kidspot.com.au.

Many local Councils, PCYCs, Bunnings Ctrs and other organizations/businesses come to the rescue during school holidays.

A first start is always to contact your local **Community or Neighbourhood Ctr.** As they usually have the best up to date local information. These Centres can also let you know about other useful services such as free courses to help handle difficult children or even cooking nutritional meals on a budget.

Don't forget the Seniors Enquiry Line as they keep up with this sort of information as well. (1300 135 500)

Your **local paper** is another great source of help. Finally, never be backward in contacting any of your **local politicians**.



Legal Assistance

Each month, I try to address the **main problems** that I have been rung about during the time and this month, without a doubt, the availability of affordable legal assistance has been the most common topic.

As many callers have found, it is extremely **difficult to get legal aid** for the sort of court cases that grandparents face.

Even though governments have legislated that grandparents have rights, these rights don't seem to have filtered down to the coal face.

Legal Aid, however, is not your only option.

Many times, I have warned readers that getting the **right legal expertise is difficult and needs research.** Many solicitors, who may specialize in Family Law are not up to speed on grandparenting issues. This warning remains in force for the following services I am about to refer you to. So, **BEWARE**, and keep your wits about you despite the stress you are enduring. Keep looking until you find someone who is understanding of your position. (Please feedback to me re those who are treating you well.)

Searching Community Legal Centres will for the right person can be very productive. In Queensland the website is www.gails.org.au interstate try www.naclc.org.au

For those not on the net, I have a list of Queensland Centres and can get interstate places through the net. Please contact me.

These legal may not be able to represent you, but they can assist you to prepare legal letters etc. **You are able to represent yourself in Family Law Courts.** This is the most cost effective way, but still needs good legal advice.

No matter your situation, it is always advisable to seek legal advice and remember,

No matter what; **KEEP A DIARY** of all events as you never know when you may need it and be aware that **court proceedings often have poor outcomes for the family in the long run.**

KinKare is an independent community group supported and auspiced by Connect the Coast Assoc. Inc.

Contact: Maree Lubach 15 Mimi Crt, Mt Warren Pk Qld 4207 www.kinkare.com.au

Ph. (07) 3287 1664 Email mlubach@optusnet.com.au



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

These are no longer happening. To re-start
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

LOWOOD

KinKare assisted

Meets the second Monday of the month 9:30am @
Lowood & District Comm. Ctr.
Ph The Hub 5426 2864.

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, Hambleton House Community Centre,
Edmonton

Ph Janet or John (07) 40 555 161

Email johnjan@cairns.net.au

TOWNSVILLE region

G'parents Support Group

For details of this group, please contact
Ph. Nev (07) 4774 0742

Email trcota@primus.com.au

Group Meetings

As you can see our list of meeting places is growing rapidly. 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

Many of our groups will have changed details. Please forward them to me ASAP so I can keep our notices up to date. Changes that have been notified to me are in **bold type** for easier recognition.

Nerang members, please accept my apologies for misprinting the meeting time in the last newsletter.

It has now been corrected and I will be there next Wednesday June 27th 12:00 noon

Going Through the Rough Times

Family relationships can put us through some very tough times. It is devastating to see the little ones you raised unable to look after their own children or lock you out of their lives and the lives of grandchildren.

It is at times like this that we often feel alone and unable to move forward. We just want to hide away for a while. There are some things though that you should keep in mind.

Extreme stress and worry can be very detrimental to your health. Make sure you get along to your doctor and explain what you are going through so he/she can help you cope without major health issues. You want to be there for your grandchildren.



Keep your diary up to date. It is all too easy to feel that circumstances will never change, but it is highly unlikely they will stay the same. Your diary may be one of the most important items you need to rely on later. This may be for a court case, proving your concerns to the Dept. or letting your grandchildren know in the future that you never stopped loving them.

Both rearing grandchildren and being denied access to them have one very important in common. **It doesn't happen overnight.** There are months, or even years, of emotional upheaval beforehand and more to come.

Try not to let yourself become isolated from people your own age.

You need someone you can talk to. This someone needs to understand and not be judgemental. Many times grandparents feel they cannot talk about this with family or friends. After a while, grandparents often feel the empathy has worn off, but they still need to have a sounding board. This could be a professional counsellor or someone from a support group depending on how you are coping. (Remember the doctor.)

Don't ever think you must have caused this. It is too common to be just you. Your children are adults making their own decisions.

If you feel there is no-one there, KinKare always is. When you need to get it off your chest, ring me (3287 1664).

I am home most nights and always happy to talk to you.

Remember, there is light at the end of the tunnel and it won't always be an oncoming train!!!

Troubles with the Department of Child Safety?

Many calls every month are from people having trouble with the Department. I will try to address as many as possible.

The Department has a "complaints" system in place, but to be honest it is not working. Most carers through the Department are frightened of reprisals should they complain. I can well understand that fear.

If you have children through the Department you would be well advised to join an organization like Foster Care Q'ld or the like. It is cheap and they have staff who can advise and assist you in tricky situations.

Make sure you get for a kit for kinship carers, or some **written outline of your rights and responsibilities** from the Dept.

Ask for minutes of any family conferences/meetings for your records and keep asking until you get them. These will contain important references to the type and level of services the Dept has to fund. Your CSO may change constantly so **you need to have these records.**

Despite your frustration, always **be polite** but firm. (The officers of the Dept work under considerable pressure and experience many unspeakable abuses on children.) This, however, does not mean they can work outside the policy guidelines set down by the Dept. (Available on line. www.childsafety.qld.gov.au go to "Protecting Children", in the library section click guides and manuals or from the Dept office you are with.)

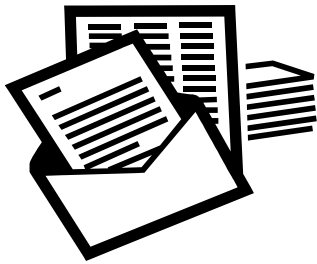
Where possible, always have a **third person** present at meetings to verify the proceedings.

It is important that you are aware of **your rights and their responsibilities as well as the other way round.**

This doesn't mean you have to act on them every time, but you must know them.

If you are worried about the safety of children, you can contact the Children's Commission. (Ph 3247 5525). Also ask neighbours, relatives or friends to notify the Department if they see anything of concern. Once again, you must persist.

In all cases, **don't be shy about contacting your local State or Federal member** and document the behaviours you are worried about.



Our Personal Page

KinKare and how it Works

The reason I decided to write this article is because we were absolutely distraught that Minister Warren Pitt MP, or rather his public servants, saw fit to take an idea from us and write a funding opportunity for almost the very same thing. They then put it out for tender. We applied, but were unsuccessful, despite the fact that we had all the necessary resources and experience in place. Unfortunately, this is not the first time these same people have done this. **My biggest disappointment is that it will now take so much longer for the help to get to grandparents in remote areas** as other bodies will need to do a lot of ground work first in order to be useful.

For close to 5 years, KinKare has serviced grandparents from all around Q'ld and interstate, other State's governments and many community organizations in order to make life easier for grandparents.

We have never had funding, as such, and have always had to rely on our own resources.

Occasionally we have managed to gain limited monies for special projects, but, everyday running costs come from our personal monies.

KinKare is growing beyond all expectations of those of us who set it up and there are still many carers out there who need our services.

We need your help!

We need reliable, self-motivated people, with basic computer skills (incl. accessibility to email and the internet) and initiative, to do the following:

- 1) Research issues relevant to carers as they come up.
- 2) Send out notices to local papers about events and issues, as requested, format supplied
- 3) Write letters/articles for the newsletter
- 4) Follow up on carer's enquiries
- 5) Organize social events for carers in your area
- 6) Distribute our newsletter to those you know may be helped or can help
- 7) Encourage other carers to come forward.
- 8) Set up new groups in your area
- 9) Be a contact person for those in your area who have no-one else to talk to and can't afford the phone call to me

Please dig deep and help



Laughter is the Best Medicine!

Age and Experience

A wealthy old lady decides to go on a photo safari in Africa, taking her faithful aged poodle named Cuddles, along for the company.

One day the poodle starts chasing butterflies and before long, Cuddles discovers that he's lost.

Wandering about, he notices a leopard heading rapidly in his direction with the intention of having lunch.

The old poodle thinks, "Oh, oh! I'm in deep doo-doo now!" Noticing some bones on the ground close by, he immediately settles down to chew on the bones with his back to the approaching cat.

Just as the leopard is about to leap the old poodle exclaims loudly, "Boy, that was one delicious leopard! I wonder if there are any more around here?" Hearing this, the young leopard halts his attack in mid-strike, a look of terror comes over him and he slinks away into the trees.

"Whew!", says the leopard, "That was close! That old poodle nearly had me!"

Meanwhile, a monkey who had been watching the whole scene from a nearby tree, figures he can put this knowledge to good use and trade it for protection from the leopard.

So off he goes, but the old poodle sees him heading after the leopard with great speed, and figures that something must be up.

The monkey soon catches up with the leopard, spills the beans and strikes a deal for himself with the leopard.

The young leopard is furious at being made a fool of and says, "Here, monkey, hop on my back and see what's going to happen to that conniving canine! Now, the old poodle sees the leopard coming with the monkey on his back and thinks, "What am I going to do now?", but instead of running, the dog sits down with his back to his attackers, pretending he hasn't seen them yet, and just when they get close enough to hear, the old poodle says.

"Where's that damn monkey? I sent him off an hour ago to bring me another leopard! Moral of this story....

Don't mess with old farts...old age and treachery will always overcome youth and skill!

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