

# MONTHLY NEWS

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## Editorial

Hi Everyone,

Winter is here and I hope you have had a better chance at avoiding the dreaded flu than I have. Still I am over it now and back on deck.

Attached to this newsletter is a basic **framework for our new National Body**. Please refer to the article in this issue as we need your input. So far no funding but we need to be ready WHEN it comes through. (I'm the eternal optimist!)

By now all of you who come to meetings should have your **new Child Support info**. They are too costly to post but can be obtained from ChildSupport. (Please see article.)

This week SEL is running their **Peer Skills programme** in Beenleigh and I am really looking forward to being there. Unfortunately, not for long as other commitments also loom large! This programme is designed to help us support each other better and hopefully a successful outcome will lead to more sessions. I know it is a big commitment of your time but I am sure it will be well worthwhile.

The **SEL Time for Grandparents** programme, is a great way to ease the burden of respite for grandparents as well as keeping you informed of other local assistance organizations. If you have any issues of concern you would like advice about, please contact them on 1300 135 500.

Seniors week is coming up in August and there is a great **picnic planned in Nerang on August 22<sup>nd</sup>**. As I am attaching the framework to this newsletter, I plan to attach the flyer next time. (For email recipients). If you would like further details before then please contact Tracey on 5596 5523.

Love,  
Maree



Australian Government

Child Support Agency

Child Support is something you may be entitled to but are not sure. Here is some information from their website.

### You receive child support but are not the parent

If you provide care for a child and you are not the parent, you can receive child support from both parents of the children if you apply for a [child support assessment](#).

Child support is still worked out using both parents' incomes, cost percentages and child support percentages — similar to how child support is worked out for parents. However, only your cost percentage, based on your level of care, is relevant to working out how much child support is payable — your income is not taken into account.

### Applying for child support

A non-parent carer can apply for a child support assessment if all of the following applies:

- you [care](#) for a child 128 nights or more a year (35 per cent or more care)
- you are not the child's natural or adopted parent and
- you aren't in a domestic relationship with either of the child's parents.

If you [apply for a child support assessment](#), you must apply against both parents except:

- [where one parent is not a resident of Australia or a reciprocating jurisdiction](#)
- where one parent is deceased, or
- we are satisfied there are special circumstances, for example the other parent is unknown.

For more information follow the links (email people)

Or PH 131 272





## 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 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month @ 10:30am,  
The Hub, Corsair Ave  
Ph Maree 3287 1664.

### KinKare CLEVELAND

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

### KinKare BEAUDESERT

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

### KinKare GOODNA

Starts on November 17<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto: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](mailto:trcota@bigpond.net.au)

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

### Granpower

[www.granpower.org.au](http://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.

## A National Body for Grandparents

For many years now, grandparent support group leaders have dreamt of the day when we would have a National body to assist our carers and create the kind of national awareness we need in order to gain understanding and recognition.



COGs is going to attempt to do this at our National Conference in November. The concept has been tried before but has not, for one reason or another, managed to get off the ground. The difficulties found on previous attempts have been addressed and we are therefore quietly confident that we may, at least, make a giant step forward should we manage to gain the necessary funds.

Attached/enclosed is our proposed framework for the National Body. We are asking for your input about anything we may have overlooked. When reading the document please bear in mind the following:

- This is a **proposal**, not a detailed final plan for the body
- It assumes that bodies will eventually be established in all States and that these, as well as the national body, will help **strengthen each other and local groups**. At present, to our knowledge, there are State bodies only in Q'ld & NSW so the document had to be written to accommodate both now and later.
- Much of the **decision making will need to be done by the first delegates/representatives**.
- **All relative carers**, not just grandparents, **must** be included.
- **Grandparents** denied access, or full-time baby sitters etc **must** also have a place.
- All **voting rights** should belong to **carer delegates** (representing **groups not individuals**.) It is important that this body reflects the concerns of the members and is run by them i.e. always remaining a grass roots body.
- The National Body will have to stick to **Standing Orders** and the **Chair** should come **from other organisations** to allow all reps to speak freely and put motions.

Please ring to talk to me if you have any questions/suggestions and I will attempt to answer your question or refer you to someone who can.

## Which Way is Best?

Each month, I get a large amount of calls from carers wanting to know which the best way is for them when it comes to the security of the grandchildren they are raising or have serious concerns about. Please seek further advice as this is a very brief account.

You must check all avenues and weigh them up with your own personal circumstances.

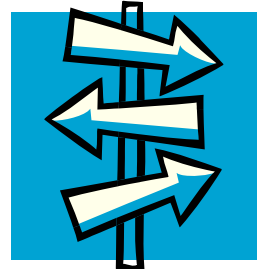
There are basically three avenues to look at.

- a) Involving the Department of Child Safety
- b) Going through Federal Family Law
- c) Or going it alone with no paperwork.

All have their pros and cons and you should make sure you know exactly what each involves for you. **BUT there is no way, other than adoption, that you can be totally sure that the children will be permanently with you.**

Court orders, whether they are gained through Child Safety or Federally are not set in concrete and can be altered if circumstances change.

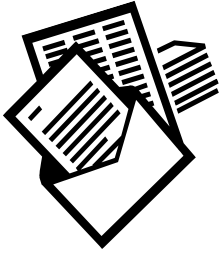
Going through Child Safety is really not your choice but theirs. They must consider the child to be in need of protection and then "place" the child with you. There are several steps or stages to this procedure and most are invasive and stressful. If the child is already in your care, chances are that they will not deem him/her to be in need of protection. However, if placed, you are entitled to the fostering allowance.



The Federal Family Law system can be extremely expensive and often does not give satisfactory outcomes unless there are consent orders or parents fail to appear. If you do get a positive decision, you are able to claim Child Support.

With both this and going without paperwork, you are able to claim Centrelink benefits if eligible. Foster carers can also claim these benefits and the fostering allowance is not classed as income.

We can help you gain free legal advice if you need it. That is advice only; **not representation**.



## Our Personal Page



## Laughter is the Best Medicine

### Good Support Groups

#### (Tips for running, or looking, for a good group)

Grandparents often asking what a support group does and how they can benefit from going to meetings. The best answer to that is to ask all those who keep going back.

Generally, grandparents find talking to someone who understands gives a great sense of relief when they are feeling swamped. (We all do at some stage, and probably quite often.) There is no magic wand to wipe away troubles, but a problem shared is a problem halved as the saying goes.

Support groups are only as beneficial as the members who attend. Each one has its own characteristics. It is important that become involved and make it their own.

A good support group has a variety of members. Those raising through the Dept, or otherwise, and those denied access. That way there is always someone you can relate to. It is also comforting to see other "normal" people, just like you, who have found themselves in the same position.

The two MOST important things you should make sure the group provides are **confidentiality and accurate information**.

**Confidentiality** in that your personal details are not passed on to anyone else without your permission. I often have requests by bona fide people for members' **phone numbers** but these are NEVER passed on unless I have spoken personally to the member and gained permission. I do not accept a blanket "pass my details on to anyone". Each time is a separate situation and needs separate approval.

**Accurate information** can be difficult as each person's situation is different so one size does not fit all. Therefore brochures and referral are the only way to go. DO NOT accept someone else saying you are entitled/able to do something; **get a referral to a knowledgeable professional**.

Almost everything else is up to you. If you don't feel there are enough social activities; offer to organise some: not enough members for you; offer to put notices around. You are the key to a successful group.

Remember these are sent in by readers and are much appreciated by all.

While Ant and Dec were in the local Sainsbury's, they decided to get in on the weekly charity raffle.

They bought five tickets each at \$1 a pop. The following week, when the raffle was drawn, each had won a prize.

Dec won 1st place- a year's supply of gourmet spaghetti sauce and extra long spaghetti.

Ant won 6th prize- a toilet brush.

About a week or so had passed when the men met back at Sainsbury's. Ant asked Dec how he liked his prize, to which Dec replied, "Great!, I love spaghetti!"

Dec asked Ant, "How 'bout you, how's the toilet brush?"

"Not so good," replied Ant, "I reckon I'm going to switch back to paper."



The doctor, after an examination, sighed and said, 'I've got some bad news. You have **cancer**, and you'd best put your affairs in order.'

The woman said to her daughter 'Well, daughter, we women celebrate when things are good, and we celebrate when things don't go so well.

So, let's head to the club and have a martini.' After 3 or 4 martinis, the two were feeling a little less somber. There were some laughs and more martinis.

They were eventually approached by some of the woman's old friends, who were curious as to what the two were celebrating.

The woman said 'I've been diagnosed with **AIDS**.' The friends were aghast, gave the woman their condolences and beat a hasty retreat.

The woman's daughter leaned over and whispered, 'Momma, why did you tell them you were dying of AIDS!

'Because I don't want any of those b\*\*\*\*\* sleeping with your father after I'm gone.'

**And THAT, my friends, is what is called, 'Putting Your Affairs In Order!**