

MONTHLY NEWS

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Editorial

Hi Everyone,
 Hope you have all been enjoying the rain. It seems to make everything fresh and clean. We have been working hard again this month on your behalf and have quite a lot of news to relate. It is encouraging to see so much awareness beginning, but we still have a long way to go as you will see by one of our articles. Making such major changes, as we need to get justice, will take time.
 Don't give up though as we are on the way!
 My love and best wishes as always,
 Maree



Picnic Time Date Claimer

At a recent meeting, the members decided it was time for us to take a break and kick up our heels before the pressures of the silly season.
On Sunday September 16th, we are meeting at the Southbank Beach from 10:30am onwards. (UBD Map 4 D18).
 Negotiations are under way to provide a sausage sizzle and maybe even some train travel costs. Please try to travel by train as you can then use your ticket for a City Cat trip as well.
 A flyer will be sent out closer to the date with details and an RSVP date so costs can be evaluated.
 We are hoping to make this a big day for grandparents and other support groups are encouraged to make every effort to attend.



Minister for Child Safety

During the month, Danni and I were given an audience with the Honourable Desley Boyle MP, Minister for Child Safety. Although she is a busy woman, she gave about an hour of her time to talk very openly with us and we covered many more issues than we had expected. We found her to be a down to earth person and concerned about the problems we brought up. Most, she was already aware of.

Minister Boyle has promised to speak with Minister Pitt to see if there is some avenue where the current **Time for Grandparents respite programme** may be opened to grandparents through her Dept. In particular, we are hopeful that the Grand Camps will be made available. As we had hoped, the Minister has a more realistic approach to **safely reunifying** children with their parents and the Dept is exploring this matter.

We mentioned the problem of **returning children to drug addicted parents too soon**. The Dept has been investigating the possibility of mandatory drug testing, but it is a problematic issue given the variety of addictions.

The Minister was disappointed to hear that policy was not always being followed and urges everyone to make known instances where correct paperwork (or procedure) is not forthcoming. Once again, the failure of **the current complaints system** is not being acknowledged. (The steps for complaint are in a later article.)

However, Ms Boyle was adamant that anyone who feels they are not being listened to will always be able to bring it to her attention through her office. If you wish KinKare can do this on your behalf. We have had many positive dealings with her people and strongly recommend you take up the offer.





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

G'parents Support Group

For details of this group, please contact

Ph. Nev (07) 4774 0742

Email trcota@iprimus.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

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



Complaints System Dept.

Below is a copy of the avenues for complaint sent to me by Minister Boyles Office as promised in an earlier article.

If all avenues within the CSSC have been exhausted then concerns should be directed to the Zonal Office:
 Brisbane North and Sunshine Coast: 5490 1040
 Brisbane South and Gold Coast: 3884 8800
 Logan and Brisbane West: 3380 6635
 Ipswich and Western Zone: 4699 4255
 Central Zone (Maryborough to Bowen): 4938 4699
 Northern Zone (Townsville to Mt Isa): 4799 7943
 Far Northern Zone: (Cairns to the Cape): 4039 8354

If you cannot resolve the issue at Zone level there is a Central Complaints Unit: 1800 080 464

If you feel that you need to go outside the department to have your complaint heard:

Minister Boyle's Office:
 Phone: 3224 7477
 Fax: 3210 2190
 Email: childsafety@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian:
 Phone: 3247 5525
 Freecall: 1800 688 275
 Fax: 3247 5507
 Website: www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au

Ombudsman:
 Phone: 3005 7000
 Freecall: 1800 068 908
 Fax: 3005 7067
 Website: www.ombudsman.qld.gov.au

I honestly believe that Minister Boyle is trying to improve the service of her Dept so **it is important** that she knows of the issues.

Remember, if for any reason you would prefer KinKare to do this for you, we will. A complaint, however, is as strong as the person making it and really should not be anonymous.

Info Update

There is so much news to pass on this month! I am going to try to squash it all into this column.

Payments to grandparents in other States.

You may remember that some time ago it was rumoured that Q'ld and NT were the only places in Australia that did not make payment to grandparents except through child protection. This is not so.

NSW and NZ have options **where there are identified child protection concerns, but where court intervention is not required.** These are being reviewed.

The Dept is working on a wider response to permanency in care following feedback on the consultation paper last year re **permanent parenting orders.**

Free school holiday activities for 12-15 yr olds.

We were contacted by an organization (ACRO) offering to open their school holiday programme to our grandchildren. Camps as well as day activities.

Please contact Fiona Begg
 3221 0088 for more details.



Five **Elder Abuse Centres** have just opened in Q'ld. Elder Abuse is **not just physical!**

Below are contact details.

Brisbane 3254 1811; **Cairns** 4031 7179;
Townsville 4721 5511; **Hervey Bay** 4124 6863;
Toowoomba 4616 9700

There are now seven **Family Relationship Centres** open in Q'ld. (Federal Family Law)

Cairns 4041 6063; **Gold Coast** 5656 1700;
Ipswich 3810 4800; **Upper Mt Gravatt** 3423 6967;
Rockhampton 4927 1210; **Strathpine** 3423 6962;
Sunshine Coast 5452 9700; **Townsville** 4779 4211

Centrelink eligibility requirements are about to change for **Age Pensions, Disability Support and Carers Payments.** You may be entitled to more than before as the assets test has been altered.

Contact details are 13 23 00 for age pensions and 13 27 17 for Disability or Carers



Our Personal Page



Laughter is the Best Medicine!

This month three stories have made a very strong impact on me. It is unusual these days as I felt I had become almost shockproof over the years.

Two stories had a common thread; that of so-called professionals showing total ignorance of the real world our children live in.

I must keep the stories general to avoid anyone being recognized. The first is of a Family Law Court judge faced with making interim residency orders. The Court found that there was sufficient cause to investigate the parent for abuse/neglect. He then ordered the children to be taken from the grandparents and placed with the parent until the investigation was completed! So much for common sense!

Recently a solicitor told me how she had fought for a child to be placed with grandparents but lost. Only a couple of weeks later she was back before the Court as the parents had held the child's hands in boiling water causing severe burns

The second story is about a grandparent called to an interview at school as the grandchild had been in trouble. (Not serious enough, it seems, to be placed in their programme for misbehaving students.) However, the very first comments made questioned the grandparent's ability to raise the child for another 6-8 years. There is no way a similar remark would have even been thought of if it had been a parent; of any age!

The third story is quite unique. A grandparent had a knock on the door from officers who had been sent to check on her sanity. Luckily, this grandparent had the experience and "presence of mind" under pressure to keep her cool and not react poorly. No information was available to her as to the reasons for, or instigators of, the notification. Perhaps it was just a question of her age! **Outrageous!!!!**

Ever since I initially had contact with grandparents in trouble, I have been astounded by the many abuses occurring in this day and age. I don't even question if they could possibly be happening anymore. I have heard the same type of reports over and over. I know they are real, unbelievable and very damning of our society. It seems just when I think we are really making progress and getting some understanding and awareness happening, something like this comes along to knock me off my perch!

We have all been in the position of just wanting to hide away. The rest of us must keep going and getting stronger for those of us who are not strong enough for themselves at present.

The "New Navy"

The Master Chief noticed a new Seaman one day and barked at him to come into his office.

"What is your name?" was the first thing the Master Chief asked the new guy.

"John," the new guy replied.

The Master Chief scowled, "Look, I don't know what kind of bleeding-heart, liberal pansy stuff they're teaching Sailors in Bootcamp today, but I don't call anyone by their first name. It breeds familiarity and that leads to a breakdown in authority. I refer to my Sailors by their last name only - Smith, Jones, Baker - that's all. I am to be referred to only as 'Master Chief.' Do I make myself clear?"

"Yes, Master Chief!"

"Good! Now that we got that straight, what is your last name?"

The new guy sighed and said, "Darling. My name is John Darling, Master Chief!"

"Okay, John, the next thing I want to tell you is..."

She was in the bathroom, putting on her makeup, under the watchful eyes of her young granddaughter as she'd done many times before.

After she applied her lipstick and started to leave, the little one said,

"But Gramma, you forgot to kiss the toilet paper goodbye!"

My young grandson called the other day to wish me Happy Birthday. He asked me how old I was, and I told him, "62." He was quiet for a moment, and then he asked, "Did you start at 1?"

A little girl was diligently pounding away on her grandfather's word processor. She told him she was writing a story. "What's it about?" he asked. "I don't know," she replied. "I can't read."