



DECEMBER 08

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Listed below are some websites that may be of interest.

- www.grandparentsqld.com.au
- www.kinkare.com.au
- www.seniors.gov.au
- www.apsl.com.au/grandparent.html
- opso.com.au/grandparents.htm
- www.fsa.org.au
- www.familycourt.gov.au/
- www.familyrelationshiops.gov.au
- www.legalaid.qld.gov.au
- www.raisinggrandchildren.com.au
- www.grandparents.org.au
- www.caxton.org.au

No internet access?

Let Seniors Enquiry Line do the searching for you

Phone 1300 135 500



GRAND MATTERS

SEASONS GREETINGS FROM JULIE, CHRIS, BARB, TANYA, JASON, MICHAEL, SHARLENE, JOANNE AND WILMA

Recognition for the Time for Grandparents Program

Lifeline's Time for Grandparent's program won the Encouraging Participation in Outdoor Recreation Award at the Queensland Outdoor Recreation Awards.

It is the camps, held in Brisbane's Redland Bay, Bundaberg and Townsville, that have caught the attention of the judges from the Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation for their annual award ceremony at Victoria Park, Herston.

The weekend camps provide the children with fun, energetic activities while offering grandparents professional support services and programs in problem solving and self care.

There are currently over 800 children and 500 families involved in the program across the State. Seniors Enquiry Line with the assistance of the Department of Communities is looking to extend the camps to more regional areas next year.

For more information on the program call Time for Grandparents on 1300 135 500 during business hours. For more information on awards refer www.qorf.org.au.

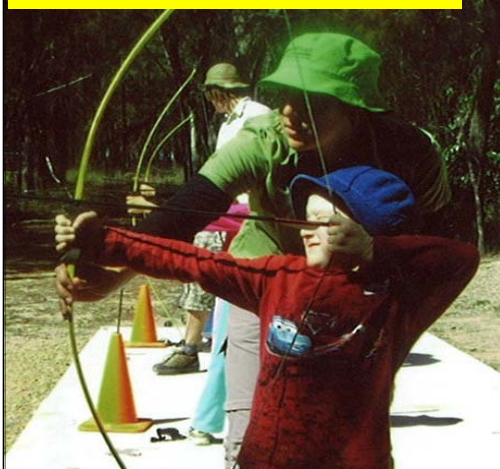
The Camp Kindilan Journey

Grandparent, "I am a little concerned about attending the camp. My grandchild never leaves my side. I don't think he will have the confidence to try the activities."

Grandchild, after a little while settling in at Kindilan, "Let me go in my own canoe. I don't need any help."



Remember to contact Seniors Enquiry Line to register for regular activities and Grandfamily Camps.



Santa Claus has the right idea. Visit people only once a year—Victor Borge

What is a Mum's favourite Christmas carol? Silent Night.

Where does Santa stay when he's on holidays? At a HoHo-tel.....



YOUR HEALTH

Women and eating issues.

An information sheet produced by the Office for Women examines the struggles, pressures and conflicts many women and girls experience with food and body image.

Being concerned about their physical appearance is commonly assumed to be a 'natural' part of being female and most women in western societies have dieted at some stage of their lives. However, a small number (one to two percent) of women become obsessed with food, developing eating patterns that seriously affect their health. The medical profession describes these conditions as eating disorders.

If you are concerned that someone you know may be affected by an eating disorder or have high levels of anxiety about how they look or what they eat, the following contacts may be of assistance

Women's Infolink—for referral to a service nearest to you—1800 177 577

Office for Women "Find a Service" - Online service locator of more than 2000 government and community services for women. www.women.qld.gov.au/findaservice

Eating Disorders Association Inc.—07 3891 3660 or www.eda.org.au

Eating Disorders Outpatient Service—07 3636 5241

Isis Centre for Women's Action on Eating Issues—07 3848 3377 or www.isis.org.au

Mental Health Association of Queensland 1300 729 686, 07 3271 5544 or www.mentalhealth.org.au

Women's Health Queensland Wide Inc. 1800 017 676, 07 3839 9988

Peer relationships

The peer group becomes the all important reference point in the development of identity for the average adolescent. The relationships formed in this stage of development are important in learning the social skills required to make, maintain, and sustain healthy relationships. Often friendships and relationships can be intense, highly emotional and, at times, quite volatile.

Frustrating for you may be the hours spent talking on the phone to friends about seemingly trivial things. Relax! These long and seemingly pointless conversations are a normal and healthy part of adolescence. More and more young people prefer to chat online rather than by phone. Whatever they choose they are busy forming important social relationships, making contact with each other and developing skills in handling complex relationships.

Consider how much worse it would be if they weren't talking to anyone!

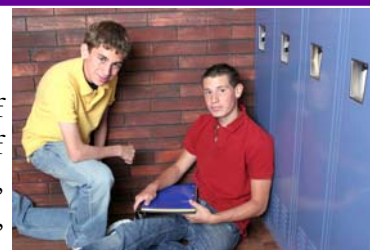
The average teen will spend increasing amounts of time with peers and decreasing amounts at home with family.

Your support and unconditional love are essential while adolescents make sense of the social world. Discovering their own place in the world, including their values and moral code, identity and social rules, can be a confusing and difficult task for many adolescents. They need a safe and stable landing pad as they make and lose friends, girl/boyfriends, deal with rejection, and fall in love and out of love.

Make a point of getting to know your grandchild's friends and showing an interest in them. If you have real concerns about the people they are socialising with, make a time to sit down with your grandchild and discuss it.

From: **Grandma, you make me want to touch the sky.**

A copy of this book is available from Seniors Enquiry Line 1300 135 500.





Parent Tips

Make you and your grandchild feel good

- **When you feel good about your child, tell him.** See if you can give your child some words of encouragement. *Accept that everyone is different and love that difference.* Encourage each child to develop and feel excited about their particular interests. Let them feel a sense of pride about being different and individual.

House rules

House rules are important for letting children know what is expected in your house. *House rules are up to each family to work out.*

Some examples are:

- Show respect and be polite to each other
- Respect and look after the physical things in the house.
- Respect the privacy of others.

Problem-solving

Starts with the question: "What is the problem here?"

The next step is to think up some different strategies that the child could use to solve the problem. Some solutions will be more effective than others.

- Look at a number of possible solutions, consider the upside and downside of each possible solution.
- Decide on a course of action
- Check the outcome of the strategy

Social development

Young children are beginning to learn about feelings and how to get on with other people long before their social skills are advanced.

You help your children:

- Learn about feelings by explaining them. "That makes you sad, cross or happy" as a result of something happening.
- Learn about feelings by explaining to them how others may feel. "It hurts my ears when you shout."
- Learn about getting on with others when you care about others and when you care about your own children's feelings
- By talking to them and telling them what you are doing and why
- By letting them begin to help at home and be part of caring for the home—helping with collecting the mail, feeding animals
- By not trying to make them share before they are ready to. To a young child this doesn't seem like sharing—it just seems like taking their things.



diversity

Cultural understanding

Children need to learn that being different is OK—we are all different in one way or another.

Your children will learn from you to value all the different things they can learn from others.

Jokes

What do you call a boomerang that won't come back?

A stick.

Who invented fire?

Some bright spark.

What tune do you sing in the car?

A Car-toon.

A light hearted silly joke brings smiles and laughter in the life of many children—especially when told by their grandparents

Tip Sheets are available from Dept of Communities website at www.communities.qld.gov.au

Ombudsman services in Australia

Fair, independent, impartial and free

What is an Ombudsman? An Ombudsman takes complaints from citizens or consumers about agencies, departments or providers. An Ombudsman will investigate those complaints and reach a resolution that is fair to both sides.

A free service for consumers

An Ombudsman is free for consumers, fair and independent. You don't need a lawyer to make a complaint to an Ombudsman. An Ombudsman works for a fair and reasonable

solution and is not on the side of either the consumer or the organisation the complaint is about. An Ombudsman generally has a responsibility to help improve service and administration in the organisations about which they take complaints, especially where a complaint indicated there is a more general problem.

Types of Ombudsmen

A **parliamentary** Ombudsman is appointed and funded by government. Their role is to investigate, and report on, complaints against Government departments and agencies.



An **industry-based** Ombudsman is an independent dispute resolution service set up and funded by a particular industry (for example telecommunications, energy and water, financial services, insurance, public transport). Generally the providers in a particular industry are required to be members. A Board or Council, with representatives of both industry and consumers as well as an independent Chair, is responsible for the appointment and operation of an industry-based Ombudsman. Government or independent regulators may be involved by approving the scheme and ensuring that it complies with certain standards. Sometimes a government Ombudsman is also an industry Ombudsman. An industry-based Ombudsman typically charges each member according to the number and/or the complexity of complaints it received about the company.

How do you make a complaint?

All Ombudsman services will generally ask you to try to resolve your complaint with the organisation or provider before they will take on the issue. Most industry-based Ombudsman services take complaints by phone, letter, fax, email or online. Sometimes you will be asked to submit your complaint in writing (primarily for a government Ombudsman). If you have difficulties doing this, they can help to make a written complaint.

After taking your complaint, an Ombudsman may refer you back to the organisation you are complaining about, especially if you have had only limited contact with them. You may be referred to a complaints specialist or senior officer in the agency.

If you are not able to resolve your complaint directly with the agency, the Ombudsman may investigate your complaint. The Ombudsman will contact the organisation, outline your complaint and ask the organisation to respond and make suggestions for resolving the matter. With the help of an Ombudsman staff member, you and the organisation will work towards resolution of the complaint.

Most complaints are resolved within 2 to 4 weeks, however a complex matter may take some months to resolve.

If it is not possible to negotiate a resolution, a parliamentary Ombudsman can make a recommendation for resolution to the agency. An industry Ombudsman can make a decision or determination that is binding on the member of the scheme, but not on the complainant. However, the vast majority of matters are negotiated.

Energy Ombudsman Queensland 1800 662 837

Financial Services Ombudsman (banking, brokers, credit, insurance, superannuation) 1300780808

Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman 1800 062 048

Government departments—Queensland 1800 068 908 or 07 3005 7000. Commonwealth 1300 362 072



FINANCIAL INFORMATION



SAVINGS TIPS FOR THE FESTIVE SEASON

With prices of everyday essentials increasing Christmas can be a challenging time for families on a budget and it's no surprise that many of us leave our Christmas shopping to the last minute and end up over-spending.

Here are some festive savings tips that may help:

Try to save small, regular amounts from beginning of year.

Put your tax refund away

Make a list of all the people you want to buy a gift for, allocate a specific amount to spend for each person and try not to go over that amount

Comparison shopping. If you can start preparing for Christmas early you will be able to shop around for the most competitive prices on your purchases.

Set dates for shopping and try to avoid spontaneous shopping trips which can lead to unplanned spending.

Shorten shopping trips, as long shopping trips result in tiredness which can lead to spending decisions that you may regret.

Be creative, gifts don't have to be expensive. Often the most appreciated gifts are ones that are sentimental.

Wishing you a Happy Christmas!

Robyn Underwood

Financial Counsellor Lifeline Community Care

GREAT COMPUTER DEAL FOR CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR

- ☼ Pentium 4 complete desktop system
- ☼ Windows XP Pro and Office 2003
- ☼ Internet ready with support

plus free upgrade to 512 MB RAM and free upgrade to a 15 inch flat screen for **\$250** plus postage.

Offer is available to Centrelink card holders, schools and not for profit organizations. For further information or to place an order, call WorkVentures on **1800112205**

Home energy emergency assistance

While not a concession, the Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme provides one-off emergency assistance to low income households suffering a short-term financial crisis (within the past 12 months), and who are unable to pay their current electricity and/or reticulated natural gas account and are at risk of disconnection. To be eligible you must:

- Hold a concession card
- have a base income of no more than the Commonwealth Government's maximum income rate for part age pensioners. For rate information, refer to the Centrelink publication A guide to Australian Government payments, available through the [Centrelink](http://www.centrelink.gov.au) website (www.centrelink.gov.au) or its offices.

Energy retailers will initiate the application process following consideration of all the eligibility criteria, including being registered under the energy retailer's hardship program with a commitment to a payment plan to manage future payment of energy use.

For more information, contact your energy retailer

The Office of Fair Trading

Prepare to be consumer wise - Get Out There! youth guide available now

Get Out There is a new website for young adults. Learn everything

you need to know about:

- keeping your money under control
- your rights as a consumer
- renting your own place
- buying a car
- buying a mobile phone
- finding the right job.



Visit the site at www.getoutthere.qld.gov.au. It's the ultimate survival guide for young adults.