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Listed below are some websites that may be of interest.

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

No internet access?

Let Seniors Enquiry Line do the searching for you

Phone 1300 135 500



## GRAND MATTERS

### The First "Numballie" Time for Grandparents Camp.

We would like to acknowledge the grandparents and their grandchildren who were from the first rural Aboriginal community to attend the January Numballie Grandfamily camp at Kindilan, Redland Bay.

It was a great learning experience for the facilitators at Kindilan who were very thankful to the grandparents from the community for their input and ideas. Aboriginal people from Deeds Of Grants In Trust communities (formerly called missions/ reserves or settlements) live in different landscapes and environments than mainstream Australians. Aboriginal people's connection to land, kinship responsibilities and family is the makeup of how they live and how they bring up their families in relatively harsh conditions. Aboriginal people are very resilient and adaptable, as history has proved.

**Grandparents everywhere are caring for their grandchildren but more commonly so in Aboriginal communities as kinship ties and responsibilities are their roles in community life.**

Grandfamilies live under extreme circumstances in most community settings. Women are the backbone of all societies. It is their strengths that keep families together and provide solutions for families and their communities. Many grandchildren have experienced trauma, grief and loss. They commonly witness family and community violence, many have had more traumatic experiences. Grandchildren live with the grief of families where funerals are all too often and communities are in a constant state of grief at any given time. A common thread shared by all grandparents at the camp was that their grandchildren are in desperate need for child counselling.

As one of the Aboriginal facilitators of the Numballie camp and with an understanding of past historical events that has severely impacted Aboriginal communities and families, the Grandparents camps come as a pleasant surprise and some well earned 'time out' away from the woes and norms of community life in regional Queensland.

*"Life without grandparents is life without security".*

*Dulcie Bronssch*

### Social workers

*I remember how we used to avoid them. They were the bad guys and we, as our Mums and Dads felt, 'we did not need them in our world to interfere'. But the whole system has changed drastically and I find that they, the social workers, are here to help in many ways. So I am writing this to encourage all grandparents to contact them as they really can help.*

*We never thought that we would bring up our grandchildren but we are. And there are times when everyday life just gets hard and sometimes it is hard to know where to turn or how to find someone to listen. The social workers are there to help you and listen to all sorts of problems - no matter how big or small you may think they are.*

*I really encourage all families, if you need help to make contact with a social worker.*

*It is quite easy. Go to your local doctor. He will refer you to a social worker and your first 5 visits are free. That is a good place to start.*

**Remember, A problem shared is a problem halved.**

*By a grandmother raising grandchildren.*

## SO WHAT IS CHILD COUNSELLING ALL ABOUT??

Hi! My name is Michael and I'm a child counsellor with the "Supporting Children After Separation Program" through Lifeline Brisbane.

A number of parents and grandparents often express confusion and concern about what child counselling involves, and are often reluctant to access counselling with their child or grandchild. I wanted to take some time to briefly explain what child counselling involves, what it *doesn't* involve, and why it can be a valuable and important experience for many children.

### What Child Counselling *Is* :

- A safe space for children to talk about their experiences with someone outside of their situation.
- Confidential and private—yes, even from parents and grandparents! (With the exception of safety concerns of course, and anything negotiated with the child)
- Creative and fun, using art, music, drama, play, stories, and anything else that children can find useful to tell their story.
- Something children can come back to over time, whenever they feel the need.
- Child-focused—child counsellors are there to look out for children's interests and safety at all times.



### What Child Counselling *Is Not* :

- A "fix" for your child or grandchild (E.g. "I'm bringing my child to you so that you can fix their behaviour")
- A sign that there is something wrong with either your child or yourself, or an indication of weakness or failure to cope.
- An opportunity to obtain information to use within court cases, mediation, custody arguments.
- The perfect solution for every child, for every concern!

### I'm Still Not Sure...

That's perfectly normal. Child counselling is not the perfect fit for every child, or sometimes people have previous negative experiences of counselling which are difficult to overcome. If you feel as though counselling *may* be helpful for your child, do consider speaking with a child counsellor in your area to find out more about how they work and how they feel it might be useful. For many people this can be enough to ease their fears about what is involved. The staff at Grandparents Information can put you in touch with different child counselling programs in your local area.

In future editions of this newsletter, I will provide you with more information about issues we see children facing in counselling, some possible activities you can do yourself with your children or grandchildren, and other helpful tips. Thanks for your time, and keep well!

*Michael.*

- *Michael*

### **Supporting Children After Separation Program**

Funded by the Federal Government, the Supporting Children After Separation Program (SCASP) is designed to offer support to children and young people up to the age of 18 who are experiencing parental separation (including caregivers). The program offers individual counselling using play, art and creative therapy approaches; group programs, and school-based support for children. SCASP will help children and young people understand the changes in their family structure and explore new secure and stable family relationships. The program is run in various locations around Queensland.

For contact details of the program in your area, contact Grandparents Information on **1300 135 500**.

## *Government News Release*



**ATTORNEY-GENERAL**  
**THE HON ROBERT McClelland MP**

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### **NEWS RELEASE**

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18 January

001/2009

#### **NEW RESOURCES TO ASSIST GRANDPARENTS**

Attorney-General Robert McClelland today announced that the Rudd Government will provide increased resources through the family law system to help grandparents maintain positive relationships with their grandchildren.

The initiatives being undertaken by the Government include:

- Commissioning the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) to examine the impact of the 2006 family law reforms on grandparents;
- Producing information brochures, booklets and DVDs on the importance of children maintaining strong relationships with significant people in their lives, including grandparents;
- Developing and issuing guidelines to be used by Family Relationship Centres when dealing with cases involving grandparents; and
- Exploring how the Parenting Orders, Post Separation Cooperative Parenting and Supporting Children After Separation programs can better include discussions about the importance of grandparents and other extended family members.

This work complements the \$400,000 provided by the Rudd Government to Legal Aid Commissions last year to enhance the delivery of family dispute resolution services to grandparents and other extended family members.

"The Government is committed to investing in the relationship between a child and their grandparents."

"It is a relationship that can provide children with love, support and additional care, particularly during times of family relationship difficulties," he said.

"I am confident that these materials will lead to better outcomes for families including grandparents and, most importantly, their grandchildren," Mr McClelland said.

**Media Contact: Adam Sims 0419 480 224**



## A GUIDE TO FAMILY LAW CERTIFICATES

### **The Purpose of Certificates**

Since 1 July 2008, anyone wishing to make an application to the Family Court for a Parenting Order is required to attempt to resolve the matter by Family Dispute Resolution (i.e. mediation). If court processes are still required after attempting Family Dispute Resolution, the Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner can issue one of four certificates. These certificates indicate that mediation was attempted and allows people to make a court application. The Family Relationship Centres are authorised to provide these certificates.

The rationale behind this Family Law change is that it allows parties the opportunity to resolve their disputes about children's matters before resorting to the adversarial process of Court, which is costly and can lead to entrenched conflict.

### **Exceptions to the Need for Certificates**

Parties are not required to have a certificate accompanying a Part V11 application where:

- Consent Orders are being sought
- The matter is urgent, as determined by the Court
- There is, or has been, a risk of family violence or child abuse
- A party is unable to effectively participate in the Family dispute Resolution process or
- A party has contravened court Orders made in the last 12 months.

### **The different types of Certificates**

According to section 601(8), the certificates provided by registered Family Dispute Resolution Practitioners must be in one of the following four forms:

1. The person did not attend due to the refusal or failure of the other party to attend the process:
2. The Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner considers that it would not be appropriate to conduct the proposed Family Dispute Resolution
3. The person attended Family Dispute Resolution with the other party to the proceedings, at which they made a genuine effort to resolve the issues in dispute or
4. The person attended Family Dispute Resolution with the other party to the proceedings, but that one of the parties did not make a genuine effort to resolve the issues in dispute.

### **Support to Resolve Family Disputes**

The Family Relationship Centre in Upper Mt Gravatt provides free Dispute Resolution services to assist families to make agreements about how children are cared for and how they spend time with family members.

Our services can be accessed by

- Separated or divorced parents
- Grandparents
- Extended family members

Family Dispute Resolution is a free, supportive and effective method of reaching agreements—and can avoid the time, cost and increased conflict which may occur with Court action.

Upper Mt Gravatt Family Relationship Centre, 23 Sanders St, Upper Mt Gravatt Ph 3436967. For your nearest Family Relationship Centre outside Brisbane call 1800 050 321.

**Lifeline Brisbane operates the Logan Family Relationships Centre, Ewing Rd, Logan Centre  
ph 34421550. [www.familyrelationships.gov.au](http://www.familyrelationships.gov.au)**

### **The Time Limitations of Certificates**

Certificates cannot be issued by a Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner after 12 months has passed since the last attendance or attempted attendance of that party in relation to the issue/s subject of the party's intended application to the Court. Similarly, parties may file certificates only within 12 months of the date of the last attendance or attempted attendance.

The difference between 'attendance' and 'attempted attendance' is that the former means actual attendance to the intake, pre-mediation information session and the Family Dispute Resolution session, and that the latter means actual attendance at either the intake alone or both the intake and pre-mediation information session.

**François & Carole,**

**Registered Family Dispute Resolution Practitioners. Upper Mount Gravatt Family Relationship Centre.**



# FINANCIAL INFORMATION



## EDUCATION TAX REFUND.

### What is the Education Tax Refund?

The Education Tax Refund (ETR) is a new government initiative to help with the education costs for children in primary and secondary school.

The maximum refundable tax offset per child per year will be

Up to \$375 per child (50% of costs up to \$750) per child undertaking primary studies

Up to \$750 per child (50% of costs up to \$1500) per child undertaking secondary studies.

Eligible families will be able to recoup the cost of purchases including

- Laptops
- Home computers and associated costs
- Home internet connection
- Printers
- Education software
- Trade tools for use at school
- School text books
- Stationery

**Get 50% back on your child's education expenses.**

### What if I am not required to lodge a tax return?

You can claim the ETR on the 'Education Tax Refund for individual 2009 claim' form which will be available from the Tax Office from 1 July 2009.

**Phone the Tax Office on 1300 720 092 after 1 July to request a form or download from [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au)**

### Who will be eligible?

Families receiving Family Tax Benefit (Part A) with children undertaking primary or secondary studies or whose school children receive Youth Allowance or another relevant payment will be eligible for the ETR.

Eligible families of registered home school students will also be able to claim the ETR.

The refundable tax offset will apply to expenses incurred from 1 July 2008 and will be claimed upon lodgement of a 2008-09 income tax return. Funding is currently appropriated until 2011-2012 so KEEP RECEIPTS

<http://www.ato.gov.au/individuals>

Did you know the **Time for Grandparents** now offers surfing classes?

If you don't have wrinkles  
You haven't laughed enough.

Phyllis Diller

### KinKare EAGLEBY

Meets the second Friday of each month @ 10:30am

Ph: Maree 3287 1664

### Grandparents As Parents

Community Solutions Inc.

Sunshine Coast and Wide Bay

Please phone Sharon 5437 9499

"My mother looked after my son when I had to go away to work. Her mother looked after me when I was young and pregnant. Grandmothers are the healers of families".



**A big Thank You to the grandparents who have forwarded information, suggestions and comments for inclusion in the newsletters.**