

March 2020

IN THIS ISSUE

- Term 2 Activity Renewal Reminder
- School Holiday Activities
- FairPlay Vouchers Round 2
- Disasters and the Media
- Message Stick
- Driving and Mobile Phones
- Making Homework Work
- Help Paying Bills
- Useful Contacts and Support Groups

Contact Details

Time for Grandparents Program

PO Box 2376

Chermside Central QLD 4032

Ph: 1300 135 500

E: grandparentsinfo@ucommunity.org.au

W: www.grandparentsqld.com.au

Term 2 Renewal Reminder



Are we funding term-based activities for your grandchildren? If so, please remember you need to contact **Time for Grandparents** on **1300 135 500** prior to the commencement of each term to discuss continuing your grandchild's choice of activity and the availability of funding. **We need the following information from you in order to process the payment as quickly as possible:**

- 1) Name of the activity provider or club
- 2) Contact person's name and phone number and/or email
- 3) Sign-on date, or activity start and finish date
- 4) Cost of the activity.

School Holiday Activities

The **Time for Grandparents** Program may be able to help with ideas to keep your grandchildren engaged over the school holidays. Ideas include:

- Your local library - free daily activities are provided for children of all ages
- PCYC - Police Citizens Youth Club Qld have vacation care programs in Queensland
- YMCA camping provide vacation care camps at various locations in Queensland
- Scripture Union Camps Qld run close to 100 camps across Queensland for primary and high school students.
<http://sucamps.org.au/>
- School Holiday Directory has a list of activities including camps, art, craft, outdoor activities and vacation care.
<http://www.schoolholidaydirectory.com.au/categories>

Please give us a call on **1300 135 500** if you would like further assistance in finding an activity for your grandchild over the school holidays.

Disclaimer: The materials and information included in this edition of Grandmatters newsletter are provided as a service to you and do not necessarily reflect endorsement by the Time for Grandparents Program. The Time for Grandparents Program is not responsible for the accuracy of information provided from outside sources. Groups and workshops detailed in this flyer are for your information and are not coordinated by or connected to Seniors Enquiry Line or the Time for Grandparents Program in any way unless specified.

FairPlay Vouchers Round 2



FairPlay vouchers replace the Get Started Vouchers program.

FairPlay is a program funded by the Queensland Government that assists young people to participate in sport and recreation activities. Families with eligible children can apply for vouchers valued at up to \$150 per child for use at a sport or recreation club registered with FairPlay.

Key Dates

- **Round 2 is now open** for voucher applications.
- **1 April 2020 - Round 2 closes** (unless all vouchers have already been issued)
- **13 May 2020 - Vouchers expire** and must have been presented to an activity provider.

How to apply for a FairPlay Voucher

You need to apply for a FairPlay Voucher online, so if you do not have access to a computer please contact Time for Grandparents as we may be able to assist. We will need to organise a permission form to apply on your behalf, so please call early so we can organise this. **If Time for Grandparents has applied for a voucher for you in past years, you still must contact us on 1300 135 500 for each new FairPlay voucher required. Please do not assume that Time for Grandparents automatically knows to apply on your behalf for each new round!**

Who is eligible? Children aged 5-17 years (inclusive) who are Queensland residents and hold, or whose parent/carer/guardian holds a Centrelink Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card with the children listed as dependants.

Need more information?

Phone: Smart Service Qld on **137 468**

Email: fairplayvouchers@npsr.qld.gov.au

Web:

<https://www.qld.gov.au/recreation/sports/funding/fairplay>

Disasters and the Media

When disasters such as the recent bushfires are covered by the media, caregivers need to be mindful about how much exposure their child has to this. The media often focus on the most frightening aspects of a disaster and this coverage can often contain graphic and disturbing images. Seeing this type of media coverage can cause distress or worry for children and adolescents and lead to them:

- thinking a lot about the disaster, which can impact on their sleep and their time at school.
- feeling that they are unsafe and that something bad may happen to them or their family.

Helping Your Child

It is important that caregivers help children to cope with the media coverage that they may see of a disaster. Some ways that you can do this include:

- Restricting the amount of time that children are able to access media coverage.
- Making sure that you are there with your child when they are watching coverage of a disaster. This way you can talk to them about their fears and answer any questions that they may have.
- Distracting your child from the media coverage by doing something else with them, such as watching a different TV show or playing a game.
- Reminding your child that while what is happening in the disaster is upsetting, there are also lots of good things happening in the world, though these do not always receive the same level of media coverage.
- Helping to remind your child that they are safe and that you are there to answer any of their questions and provide comfort to them if they are feeling unsafe.
- Giving support to your child when upset, answering their questions and comforting them with physical affection.

Talking to your child and making sure that you continue to follow the normal routines and rhythms of your daily life are important ways to help your child feel safe and secure. Keep in mind that if your child does begin to show signs of excessive worry or distress at the media coverage they have seen, you may need to speak to your GP.

Web:

<http://tqn.anu.edu.au/resource/disasters/>



Hello You Mob

Rain, beautiful rain has fallen across many communities in Queensland and NSW. It was particularly welcomed in areas that were **burning and scared** by the recent fires across our country in recent months.

There has been a lot of recent talk about bringing back the Aboriginal traditional methods of fire control.

Fire-stick farming, also known as cultural burning, is the practice of Aboriginal Australians regularly using fire to burn vegetation. ... This type of **farming** directly increased the food supply for Aboriginal people by promoting the growth of bush potatoes and other edible ground-level plants.

Is fire good for the Earth?

Forest **fires** are a natural and necessary part of the ecosystem. Even healthy forests contain dead trees and decaying plant matter; when a **fire** turns them to ashes, nutrients return to the soil instead of remaining captive in old vegetation.

Cool burning reduces the amount of damage done by hot fires to ecosystems by promoting new plant growth and clearing natural waste materials. Through collaboration with scientists and policymakers, Indigenous land managers are breaking new ground

More cool burns will reduce hot burns resulting in less wildlife being harmed. More cool burns will reduce hot burns resulting in fewer trees, plants and their seeds being destroyed. More cool burns will reduce hot burns, which means more grass for grazing cattle and wildlife to eat.

Web: (coolaustralia.org > [wp-content > uploads > 2013/12](#))

Message Stick

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander

NEWS

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Politics

Path to Treaty is a commitment from the Queensland Government to begin the journey towards negotiated treaties with First Nations Queenslanders. It seeks to consolidate the milestones and achievements already underway and build stronger relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders.

Path to Treaty marks the next step towards a new reframed relationship between First Nations Queenslanders and the broader Queensland community.

A Treaty is a negotiated agreement between parties. It is important to understand a treaty is only signed once all parties are in agreement.

A Path to Treaty is about reframing our profoundly important relationship with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland, so that we can start to move towards a shared future.

It is a broader conversation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders and the broader community to develop a process for state-wide agreement making in Queensland.

If you would like a copy of the Queensland Path to Treaty Consultation Paper, please contact our office on **1300 135 500** and ask for Dulcie, our Aboriginal worker.

Please stay safe and will talk more in the next edition of Grand Matters.

Driving and Mobile Phones

Mobile phone fines increase to \$1,000 from February 1, 2020.



Driving while using a mobile phone held in your hand is illegal - even if you're stopped in traffic. This means you can't:

- hold the phone next to or near your ear with your hand
- write, send or read a text message
- turn your phone on or off
- operate any other function on your phone.

Mobile phone restrictions

Learner and P1 provisional drivers under 25 must not use hands-free, wireless headsets or a mobile phone's loudspeaker function.

Learner and P1 provisional drivers' **passengers** are also banned from using a mobile phone's loudspeaker function.

Using your mobile phone safely

- Turn off your mobile phone before you get in your car so you won't be tempted to answer it.
- If you must have your mobile phone on, install a hands-free kit so you can legally drive and talk on your phone (for open or P2 provisional licence holders only), but don't forget to keep concentrating on driving.
- You can use a mobile phone held in your hand if you are legally parked. Parked means stopped with the intention of staying at that place.

Penalties

You can be fined \$1000 and have 4 demerit points recorded against your traffic history if your mobile phone is in your hand and being used for any reason while you are driving—including when you're stopped at traffic lights or in congested traffic.

Double demerit points apply for second or subsequent mobile phone offences committed within 1 year after an earlier offence.

Web: <https://www.qld.gov.au/transport/safety/road-safety/mobile-phones>

Making Homework Work

It's back to school time which means the dreaded homework battle! Here are some strategies to 'make homework work.'

Find the right time

For some children, the best time to get homework done will be soon after they get home from school. Others might like a break to play and unwind before starting on homework.

Create the right environment

It's a good idea to set up your child somewhere that has good light, air and enough space to spread out with books, pens and other resources. Younger children are more likely to work better in a family area like the kitchen table, whereas older children will most likely need their own quiet space. Wherever your child does homework, try to minimise distractions by turning off the TV and asking younger siblings to play somewhere else. You could also ask older children to leave their mobile phones with you while they're doing homework or agree that they can't use their mobile phones, laptops, computers or tablets for social media, watching videos or playing games until homework is finished.

Help your child get organised

You can show your child how to break down big assignments or projects into smaller, more manageable tasks. He might then plan to do one task each night. If he has several different assignments in one week, help him plan what to do each night. Older children might benefit from a homework planner or planning app so they can see when assignments are due and get themselves organised with a plan and study reminders.



Schoolwork isn't always easy. Your job is to help your child develop a positive approach to academic and organisational challenges. You can support your child by creating the right time, environment and approach for homework.

Web: [Raising Children Network](https://www.raisingchildrennetwork.com.au/)

Help Paying Bills

If money's tight, it can be hard to keep up with regular bills like electricity and phone. Here are a few simple steps you can take to sort things out.

Problems paying bills

If you can't pay your electricity, gas, phone or water bill, contact your service provider straight away. They will explain your options, such as:

- an extension to pay
- paying in instalments
- Centrelink deductions (Centrepay)
- applying for a utility rebate or voucher.

If you don't contact your provider, they may suspend or disconnect your service.

If you need a step-by-step guide on what to do, see the National Debt Helpline's get your bills under control information [here](#) or call 1800 007 007.

Problems paying council rates

If you can't pay council rates, contact your council as soon as possible. Ask about your payment options, such as:

- paying in instalments
- paying part or all of your rates at a later time
- writing off interest on overdue rates
- waiving or reducing your rates if your land revaluation made your rates go and caused you financial hardship.

If you don't pay your rates, the council could charge you a penalty — usually the interest on the amount you owe.

For a step-by-step guide on what to do, see the National Debt Helpline's [pay your rates](#) or call 1800 007 007.

Get help sorting out bills



Talk to a Financial Counsellor

Financial counselling is a **free and confidential** service offered by community organisations, community legal centres and some government agencies.

Financial counsellors are skilled professionals. They will listen to your problems and help you with things like:

- bills or fines you're struggling to pay
- being harassed by debt collectors
- gas, electricity or phone disconnection
- being evicted from your house
- car accidents with no insurance
- tax debts.

Financial counsellors guide you through your options. They can:

- suggest ways to improve your financial situation
- see if you're eligible for government concessions or support
- talk to your creditors about repayment arrangements
- help you apply for a hardship variation
- explain the risks of bankruptcy and talk through the alternatives
- help you organise your finances and do a budget
- refer you to other services, such as a gambling helpline, family support or legal aid.

If you feel overwhelmed by debt, contact a financial counsellor as soon as possible. If you get help early, you will have many more options. The free **National Debt Helpline** on **1800 007 007** can connect you with a financial counsellor in your local area, from 9.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday.

Web: <https://moneysmart.gov.au/managing-debt/problems-paying-your-bills-and-fines>

Grandparent Useful Contacts

Time for Grandparents - 1300 135 500
Centrelink Grandparent Advisor - 1800 245 965
Centrelink Social Workers - 132 850
Kids Helpline - 1800 551 800
Bravehearts - 1800 272 831
Lifeline Crisis Line - 13 11 14
Parentline - 1300 301 300

Beyond Blue - 1300 224 636
ARAFMI – 1300 554 660
Relationships Australia - 1300 364 277
Legal Aid Advice Line - 1300 651 188
Financial First Aid - 1800 007 007
Family Relationships Advice Line - 1800 050 321
Elder Abuse Prevention Unit - 1300 651 192

Grandparent Support Groups in QLD

In an effort to keep information current, if you find any of these details to be incorrect or if you know of any additional support groups that are not listed, please phone us on 1300 135 500 or email us at grandparentsinfo@uccommunity.org.au

CENTRAL QLD & WIDE BAY

Hervey Bay - Wide Bay Support 4 Grandparents & Carers

Phone: Karen Rogers 0457 857 457
Email: kazzarogers_6439@msn.com
Fortnightly meetings at Hervey Bay RSL for support, care and advice whilst children are being supervised.

Bundaberg - Grandparents as Carers Support & Playgroup

Phone: 0468 855 449
Weekly meetings for you to socialise with other grandparents and for your grandchildren to enjoy spending time with other children.

Mackay - Kin Carers Group

Phone: Sharon 0400 683 517 or Chris 0497 698 732

SUNSHINE COAST

Sunshine Coast - Grandparents as Parents Program

Phone: 1300 621 499
Case management, counselling and peer support available in the Sunshine Coast region.

Buderim - Grandparents Raising Children Playgroup

Phone: Michelle Poole (07) 5453 4938
Email: mipoole@playgroupqld.com.au
Weekly playgroup for any grandparent providing care for their grandchildren under school age to obtain support and interaction from like-minded people.

Gympie - Grandparents and Grandchildren Society

Phone: (07) 5482 9012
Regular meetings for grandparent carers.

Noosaville State School - Grandparents as Parents Support Group

Phone: Michelle Gameiro (07) 5440 3222
Monthly meetings for grandparents raising grandchildren who attend schools in the local vicinity.

BRISBANE & WEST MORETON

Ascot - Grandparent Playgroup

Phone: 1800 171 882
Weekly meetings for you to socialise with other grandparents and for your grandchildren to enjoy spending time with other children. More details are available via the Playgroup Qld website: <https://www.playgroupqld.com.au/>.

Deception Bay - Grandparents Support Group

Phone: (07) 3204 2022
Fortnightly meetings for support, care and advice whilst children are being supervised.

Lawnton - Grandparent Playgroup

Phone: 07 3889 0063
Encircle, Neighbourhood Centre
Meets 9:30am to 11:30am each Tuesday.
Information, support and a grandchildren's playgroup. Gold coin donation. Playgroup does not run during school holidays.