

The Coffee Break



News for Grandparents who are raising their Grandchildren

Welcome to the Winter Edition

Volume I
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Editor's Column

Hello Everyone,

I hope this latest edition of 'The Coffee Break' finds you well and warm!

Museum trip

I had a wonderful time at the Museum during the school holidays with a family from the Grandparents as Parents group. The girls were very helpful showing me the many exhibits and had fun painting spiders! If you have not been to the museum for a while, I recommend it as a great holiday activity. Entry is free and they always put on holiday activities for the children which only cost between \$2-\$5. A great way for the kids to learn while having a lot of fun!

Kathryn Away for 2 Months

I have been asked to take on another position within Helping Hand for the next 2 months so I will not be attending the groups until the end of October. However, Rachel Rice will be working with the project during this time. Rachel has a bachelor of Health Science and is very keen to work with the project. I am sure she will introduce herself to you over the next couple of weeks. Please make Rachel feel welcome and feel free to provide her with feedback and ideas about what you would like to see as part of the Grandparents as Parents Project.

I look forward to meeting with you all again soon,

Kathryn Stow

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Nobody can do for little children what grandparents do. Grandparents sort of sprinkle stardust over the lives of little children. ~Alex Haley

Care Winter Edition



Stronger Families and
Communities Strategy
An Australian Government Initiative

Get to know our members.....

If I had known how wonderful it would be to have grandchildren, I'd have had them first. ~Lois

All grandparents that attend our groups have their own special story.

We thought it would be interesting for all our members if stories could be shared, so each issue we will profile a member of our grandparent as parent community so we can all get to know them a bit better.

This month we interviewed John and Colleen Colley.

John and Colleen are the full-time carers of three granddaughters and have been for approximately eight years—Jasmine 12 (and a half!!), Jayd 9 and Kathleen, or as she prefers to call herself—Kathleen Kelly Pony— 8 years old.

Q. What has been most rewarding about your role as acting parents?

A. The reward is now—seeing not just the physical growth but the growth in the children's personalities. Seeing that the time we have put in over the years paying off. We have taught them that communication is important so they are not afraid to discuss things. When they have a passion or skill we have really run with it. For example Kathleen was always interested in the circus so we enrolled her in Cirkids when she was 3 years old and she has been doing it ever since.

Q. What has been the most difficult hurdle you have had to face in your role as acting parents?

A. Getting recognition that we are actually the grandparents

raising the children—and we don't mean (pat on the back) that type of recognition but just trying to make people understand our position. When we'd talk about it some people couldn't understand why we would take the children in, saying we chose to be where we are. We lost most of our friends. At that time too the only Government Department that recognized grandparents as parents was the Education Department. It 's different now.

Q. What is most special about relationship with your grandchildren?

A. Waking up every morning and hearing the kids say “Good Morning” and give us “good morning hug”.

Colleen—”also those giggles at bedtime”. Other things that have been important have been music—all different sorts of music, and books—John is a great story teller.

Q. Name one thing that has helped you most over the time as grandparents caring for the children?

A. Having each other—to have as a sounding board. We have a custom that we need to talk about our problems and that we all allow each other (including the children) time to talk. We also never allow the children to play one of us off against the other. We always check between us what the children have said.

Q. What would you like to see in terms of future assistance for grandparents raising children?

A. There needs to be an allowance for grandparents like the foster carers payment. There needs also to be some sort of exemption from

work. Particularly for single grandparents.

Q. What do you do when you get adult time to yourself?

A. We go shopping for those things that need us both to be there. We go out to lunch a bit. We have found the program “Time for Kids” really helpful in giving us some time.

Q. What is your most favourite thing to do as a family?

A. Sitting around the table having dinner and talking—it's amazing what plans the children can make. We also love going out anywhere really— there are so many places to go that don't cost anything. The kid's favourite places are the playgrounds, the Botanical Gardens (we've found places in there that we didn't know existed) and parks. We also have a movie night every Friday night—we watch a DVD and the kids make popcorn. Family barbeques too—the kids love to sit in the backyard and watch the birds.

Q. What advice do you think you can give other grandparents raising children?

A. John—When the children first come to you get a medical examination done straight away to assess any problems. You can always devise methods to cope if you know what you are dealing with.

Colleen—Talk to other grandparents—it helps to sort out any problems. Join support groups.



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Background

Time for Kids Inc is a respite program for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Children generally spend one weekend a month with a volunteer carer family in the metropolitan area or, during school holidays, a week or so with a family in the country. All of our families are assessed and registered foster carers with the Department for Families and Communities.

History –

Time for Kids Incorporated was founded in 1960 by the then head of the Juvenile Court, William Scales SM. He identified common themes among the children coming before him, such as disruptive family life and a lack of good role models in their formative years. He and his wife, Betty, established the *Society of Sponsors* as a way in which South Australian families could provide part-time care for these 'at risk' children.

Today the organisation is called *Time for Kids Inc* and currently assists approximately 150 children each year in Adelaide and in a number of country areas. Children commonly spend one weekend a month with their carers, or a week during school holidays. Since the organisation's inception it has helped more than 3500 children and their families.

The children we support -

Disadvantaged or 'at risk' is broadly defined to include:

- children living in low socio-economic circumstances where poverty might lead to social isolation, behavioural issues, learning difficulties and development problems;
- children who live with a single parent (most often female) who benefit from interaction with the missing gender model;
- children who have parent/parents struggling with mental and/or physical health issues where they are often required to take on a carer role;
- children who live with a sibling with a disability and who benefit from a relationship where they are the focus of attention.

In many cases, the children have experienced domestic violence.

Our carers –

Most of our carers live in metropolitan Adelaide and offer weekend respite once per month. All of our family care-givers are volunteers and receive no reimbursement. We also have a number of carers who offer children from the city an opportunity to have regular holidays in a country location during school holidays. In these cases, our agency arranges and pays for the transport of these children.

Our carers don't provide expensive gifts or extravagant entertainment. All we ask is that they share a little of their lives from time to time. It can make a world of difference to the children we seek to help. We find carers amongst families, grandparents, families with children of all ages, couples with no children as well as individuals.

Referrals –

Children are referred to us by social workers, school counsellors and other human service workers because of a genuine need for support in a caring family environment.

We link children to families who share similar interests, who can offer positive childhood experiences, perhaps some useful lessons for later life as well as acceptance, love and care.

Our service –

Time for Kids Inc manages the recruitment, assessment and training of volunteer families and matches them with young people referred to us from a number of sources. Any community service worker can refer children to us, although we do ask that the referring worker to arrange the first meeting between the carer and the child. Unfortunately, *Time for Kids* is often forced to take on this responsibility, as many referrers are only involved with families on a short- term basis.

Our aim is to provide children with experiences that not only contribute to their immediate enjoyment, safety, self esteem and development, but will enable them to become more responsible adults, parents and contributors to society in years to come.

The social benefits –

In most cases, the entire family benefits from exposure to the care givers who often add an extremely valuable 'whole family' support service. When a carer identifies a major problem, the *Time for Kids* social workers offer support and referral to the family as part of the placement.

Many adults who were helped by the organisation as children have identified this connection with the carer family as an important contributor to them making positive life choices .

The evidence

In March 2004, Dr Mark Halsey, of the Criminal Justice Program at Flinders University's Law School undertook preliminary research into the effectiveness of *Time for Kids* (at the time stilled called SOS Families for Children). In his executive summary, he stated:

Since its inception, SOS has assisted in excess of 3500 children – a proportion of whom would, on the best evidence, have most likely drifted away from key sites of social control and integration were it not for the efforts of the organisation. One of the key issues to arise out of this report is the degree to which SOS is, either by way of design or default, functioning as a key site for the practice of primary (“up stream”) crime prevention techniques. When compared with alternatives (e.g. sense of hopelessness, ongoing frustration, cycles of abuse and neglect, drifting into delinquent milieus), broadening the “original” family structure to include foster carers is one of the best and least disruptive/traumatic ways of preserving or restoring environments conducive to safe, happy and challenging (in the best sense of the term) childhoods. This, essentially, is what SOS is and has been doing for over four decades.

KIDS TAEKWONDO (TRADITIONAL MARTIAL ARTS—MODERN OLYMPIC SPORT)

- Classes starting now
- Special Education Program for Kids 5-12 years
- Youth Program for the 13+
- Experienced and Qualified Instructors
- Students will develop confidence, improve fitness and learn self-discipline



Classes in 30 different locations throughout Adelaide. To find out more: Ph 0412909500 or 8273 4221

Recipe Tips

We are always on the look out for new and interesting recipe ideas—if you have any you would like to share in our Recipe Tips section please e-mail them to dmacfarlane@helpnghand.org.au or jot them down and pass them onto Kathryn at the next group meeting.

This is easiest, yummiest chocolate cake recipe that even the kids can have a go at:

Crazy Chocolate Cake

1 1/2 cups plain flour
1 cup sugar
3 tbsp cocoa
1 tsp bicarbonate soda
6 tbsp vegetable oil
1 tbsp vinegar (white)
1 tsp vanilla essence
1 cup cold water

Grease and flour your favourite cake tin—around 20cm (8in) diameter, circle or square

Preheat oven to 180 °C (160°C fan forced)/350°F.

Place flour with sugar, cocoa, bicarb soda into a bowl (you can sift it if it seems a little lumpy but it's not necessary)

Make three depressions and among these depressions distribute the oil, then the vinegar and vanilla. Pour the cold water over all.

Mix ingredients together thoroughly with a spoon. Transfer to cake tin.

Bake for 30-35 minutes (depending on your oven) or until a skewer inserted comes out clean.

You can cool it in the tin—if you don't, just be gentle when turning it up as it will be moist!!!

Ice with chocolate icing—icing sugar, cocoa to taste, couple of drops of vanilla, spoon of margarine and water to desired consistency.

Idea for Easy Dinner—when you've run out of new ideas for healthy easy dinners—this is a fun alternative.....

Rice Paper Rolls

1 packet Rice Papers (Erawan Brand can be bought at most supermarkets—the 20cm ones are better—you can fit more in)

1/2 or 1 BBQ chicken—depending on how many people you are feeding

1 pkt Vermicilli Rice Noodles

Cucumber thinly sliced

Carrot—grated

Lettuce chopped finely

(You can adjust the salad/vegetables to taste)

Soy Sauce for dipping—or any sauce your kids will eat (Dipping Sauce is not necessary—most kids eat without)

Hot Water

Put the vermicilli noodles in a bowl with bowling water to soften.

Remove all the chicken off the bones and shred to smaller pieces. Put on a plate.

Chop up/prepare all the salad and put on a plate.

Pour some hot water into a bowl big enough to soak rice papers.

Drain the noodles and place in a bowl.

Put it all out on the table.

To make a rice paper roll, soak a rice paper in the water to soften, put it on your plate and add a bit of each of the noodles, chicken and salad—fold over the end so it doesn't fall out and roll up. Dip in sauce if you would like.

Tell the kids to help themselves—they can make their own!!!

And for the Kids In Our Lives.....



Brain Teasers



1. What letter is next in this sequence?

M, A, M, J, J, A, S, O, ___

2. yyy u r, yyyyy u b, i c u r y+y 4 ?

3. On my way to the fair, I met 7 jugglers and a bear, every juggler had 6 cats, every cat had 5 rats, every rat had 4 houses, every house had 3 mice, every mouse had 2 louses, every louse had a spouse. How many in all are going to the fair?

4. Before Mount Everest was discovered, what was the highest mountain in the world?

5. How can you use the letters in NEW DOOR to make one word?

Answers—see back page

For a Laugh:

Teacher: When you yawn, your supposed to put your hand to your mouth !

Pupil: What ?, and get bitten !

What do you call a man with two left feet ?

Whatever you like - if he tries to catch you he 'll just run round in circles !

Why did the rooster cross the road ?

To cockadoodle dooo something

Did you hear about my brother who slept with his head under the pillow?

When he woke up, he discovered the fairies had taken all his teeth!

Other places to contact for fabulous sources of information and support:

Families SA

Provide a pack of Information called “Grandparents Raising Grandchildren”. This pack contains all manner of information for all ages of grandchildren. Links can be found at the following website:

<http://www.familiesandcommunities.sa.gov.au/Default.aspx?tabid=1345> or

You can access hard copies of the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Publication at:

Families SA, Disability SA and Housing SA Offices
Grandparents for Grandchildren SA Inc
Schools
Centrelink Offices
Medicare Offices

Disability Information Resource Centre (DIRC)

This service offers a wide spectrum of information and can be accessed via the web-site:

<http://www.dircsa.org.au/>

Or the office provides library/DVD/Video/Private Consultation Areas and Hard Copies of Pamphlets at 195 Gilles St, Adelaide.

If you have any suggestions, articles, etc for the next newsletter just ring 82419023.

All ideas and contributions are warmly welcomed.

Support groups are a great source of personal support and information. Members can share ideas and offer different perspectives on parenting and children's behaviours.

It a great experience to have some social networks and connections with other local grandparents ...

If you are interested in making contact with a local group or know someone who may be interested :-

Camden Park

The first Friday of every month 10.30 am—12.30 pm at Camden Park Community Centre.
CONTACT: Julia 8271 4424

Hackham West Community Centre

The first Monday of every month 12.30—2.30 pm.
CONTACT: Jen 8305 9223

Modbury

The last Friday of every month 10.30-12.30 pm
CONTACT: Kerry 8265 5605

Peterhead Every Tuesday 10.00 am—11.30 am

CONTACT: Jean 8268 4427

Indigenous Granny's Group

CONTACT: Nunga Health Team on 8243 5611

Murray Bridge

Fourth Tuesday of every month 12:30-3pm at Nragi Wal 25 Joy Street Murray Bridge.
CONTACT Louise: 8532 5769

EMU's (Elderly Minminis Untied)

Support group for Aboriginal grandparents in the north Meets alternate Fridays 11.00am-2.00pm during school term CONTACT : Sharon 82840388

Fleurieu Support Group

Meets last Wednesday ever month, 10.30am-12.00 at Victor Harbour Contact Leann, Fleurieu Families 85510542



MORE INFORMATION **ABOUT SUPPORT**

If you are foster parent who is also a grandparent of their grandchild then you might like to ring the **Family Support Team** at Anglicare SA . Jen can be contacted on 8305 9223.

Helping Hand—SA Grandparents as Parents Project Support Groups

Modbury

The last Friday of every month 10.30-12.30pm
Office of Frances Bedford
Montague Rd Modbury North
CONTACT: Kathryn 82419023

Cheltenham

First Wednesday of ever Month at Cheltenham Community Centre Stroud St 10.00 –12.00pm
CONTACT : John 83474684

Salisbury East

Third Tuesday of the month 9:30-11:30am at the Salisbury Community Centre, 28 Smith St
CONTACT : Ted 82880757

Grenville Community Connections Hub

Casual lunch \$5.00 first Friday of the month 11.15 am-1pm
Playford Bvd, Elizabeth
CONTACT: Dianne 82520600

Too far away from one of these groups?

If you are too far away from one of these groups but are interested in having a group start in your local area (country or city) then contact Helping Hand on 82419023.



This newsletter was compiled by

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While taking all care in the preparation of this information, the agencies referred to in this newsletter accept no responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of any of the information.

It is offered as a general guide only.

About ...

Helping Hand Aged Care Inc offers a wide range of residential and community support services especially for older people. They include carer support, respite, counselling, therapy, and accommodation as part of a range of services that help people to remain living in their own homes.

Website: www.helpinghand.org.au

Child & Youth Health delivers health care and parenting support so that children and young people have the chance to 'Start Healthy and Stay Healthy'.

There are over 120 locations in SA including medical, nursing, allied health and community health professionals.

Website: www.cyh.com

Anglicare SA's Family Support Service focuses on family strengths and works with parents to help them on issues like child development, budgeting, behaviour management and household organisation.

Website: www.anglicare.org.au

Our Next Social Outing *Coffee and Catch up*

We are planning to have a morning at the Central Markets for a coffee and chat. Come along and share your stories and ideas with others.

Just a casual catch-up and chance to meet other grandparents.

Invitations will be sent out soon
If you would like more information please call the
Coordinator ph: 8241 9023

Answers to brain teasers:

1. N for November, 2. Wise you are, wise you be, I see you are too wise for ME!, 3. Just me— the others were coming from the fair, 4. Mount Everest was still the highest mountain in the world even before it was discovered, 5. One Word