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## **IMPORTANT UPDATE**

Jan 2023

# This was an article back in May 2021 –

## **INFORMAL CARERS FINALLY RECOGNISED**

The Dept. of Communities Tasmania has undertaken a review of informal kinship care arrangements completed in November 2020. The government accepted all eight recommendations. Kin Raising Kids is incredibly grateful to the Minister, Roger Jaensch for his efforts in bringing about this groundbreaking recognition. This will include the development of a service to deliver practical assistance, advocacy support, help to navigate programmes and to ensure access to assistance to which informal kinship carers may be eligible.

### **Informal Kinship Carers being recognised!**

**The eight (8) recommendations are:**

1. Establish and pilot an Informal Kinship Care Support and Liaison Service
2. Expand the eligibility of the Grandchildren Living with Grandparents Program
3. Expand the availability of training and awareness raising programs
4. Improve the availability of information and resource material for informal kinship carers
5. Review relevant Child Safety Service Client Files
6. (a) Explore government policy options and definitions that might be available to improve access to informal kinship carers, who are the responsible adults and have primary care responsibilities to meet the needs of children in their care, to improve support in:  
(b) Consider options for extending criteria to existing Government programs to improve the Government's support to informal kinship carers, including:
7. Consider changes to the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997
8. Continue national advocacy



*Above: Minister Roger Jaensch and some members of KKR including Secretary Frank Tyers, Immediate Past President Ross Henderson, Senior Vice President Lee Courto and President Garry Love during recent discussions on behalf of Kin Raising Kids*

**KRK's principle contact since then has been through Carol Carr, Informal Kinship Care Project Officer**

Community & Disability Services | Community Partnerships and Priorities Division, DPAC.

Much of the work of her team is disseminated through a Community Kinship Program governance group which is coordinated through Mission Australia and Baptcare. *Next meeting proposed on the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023.*

## Recently we received the following email from Carol:

Thank you for meeting with me last week.

By way of some follow-up to our meeting, we are aware that the increased cost of living is having a significant impact on informal kinship carers. We would like to remind you that brokerage funding and flexible respite is available from Bapcare and Mission Australia.

I have been in contact with Bapcare and Mission and both organisations have advised me that all your members need to do is get in touch with them and they can help.

Contact details below:

- **Bapcare** - Community Kinship Program

Mowbray

Ground Floor, 288 Invermay Road

Mowbray TAS 7248

Phone: 03 6323 6700

Moonah

4/95 Albert Road

Moonah TAS 7009

Phone: 03 6283 5700

- **Mission Australia** - Community Kinship Engagement Practitioner on

Devonport

35 Oldaker Street,

Devonport TAS, 7310

Phone: (03) 6420 6800

Burnie

Suite 5/4-22 Wilmot Street,

Burnie TAS, 7320

Phone: (03) 6420 6800

Rosny Park

27-31 Bligh Street

Rosny Park, TAS 7018

Phone: 03 6225 8214

*Service providers are not usually very quick in advertising their products particularly when they are struggling with resources, but the whole point of the exercise surely is to establish what the needs are, then broker funding appropriately to provide for those needs.*

In line with the recommendations approved by Government out of the Review into Informal Kinship Carers, Mission Australia in conjunction with KRK, appointed **Kate Huett** as a Grandparents and Relatives Raising Children Coordinator early last year to operate out of their Devonport office.

Kate was very well qualified to take on this role and during last year collated with a number key persons, organisations including schools and actual hands-on kinship carers. She had implemented a survey to collect numbers and data to form a basis for ongoing needs of carers and had really started to connect with the sector in the NW as requested for this pilot model.

Kate resigned from the position in late December to take up an Advocacy role with ACD Tasmania. She will be sorely missed in establishing this very important advisory type role with Mission Australia and as much as she will be missed we really need to encourage her successor in developing and understanding the support and service needs of Informal Kinship Carers generally.

Thank you, Kate, and wishing you well in your future endeavours.

Thank you for your ongoing support of informal kinship carers.

Regards Carol.

We thought it important to inform you that other supports are also being made available, not monetary at this point, through Mission Australia and Bapcare. **Carers Tasmania (1800422737)**, are currently running **NDIS forums around the State**. Both **Carers Tas** and **ACD (1800244742)** also offer several beneficial support services worth checking out as well.

## THE THEME OF krk'S AGM, OCT 2022.



### Dr Meredith Kiraly

Dr Meredith Kiraly a psychologist with over thirty years' experience in child and family welfare. She is an Honorary Research Fellow in the University of Melbourne Social Work Department and has a small consultancy in human services. Since 2009 Meredith has specialised in kinship care research and advocacy. She has made many national and international conference and seminar presentations. Current commitments include advocacy for recognition and support of kinship care arrangements including all carer-child relationships, both informal and formal.

### Tom Allsop

Tom lead's the advocacy and strategy functions for PeakCare Queensland, a peak body for the Queensland Child and Family sector. As PeakCare's Principal Advisor, Tom brings more than 12 years' experience as a senior leader and Director in both the government and not-for-profit sectors and is currently leading a range of state-wide and national advocacy initiatives focused on increasing recognition and support for Australia's informal kinship carers.

As guest speakers they jointly presented a PowerPoint titled '**Going National: a pathway to addressing poverty and disadvantage for Australia's informal kinship carers**'. This turned out to be a very informative and interesting session.

### National Advocacy Approach



With the aim of developing a national informal kinship care network:

- > To achieve recognition by the Federal Government of the existence, numbers & unmet support needs of all children in informal kinship care in Australia and their carers.
- > To work towards the implementation of the Recommendations of the 2014 Senate Inquiry and 2015 Senate Inquiry.
- > To acquire funding for a National Kinship Care Organisation and establish the organisation.

### A modification to recognise kinship carers as 'carers' in Commonwealth legislation?

A carer is an individual who provides personal care, support and assistance to another individual who needs *it* **for full-time care to that person's dependent children who need it** because that other individual:

- (a) has a disability; or
- (b) has a medical condition (including a terminal or chronic illness); or
- (c) is frail and aged; or
- (d) has a mental illness; or
- (e) has another condition causing significant parental incapacity.



## ABS Review of Census Topics



In 2018, the following topics were considered for inclusion in the Australian Census:

- chronic health conditions and smoking status
- journey to education
- Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander cultural identity
- current or previous service in the Australian Defence Force
- non-binary sex and/or gender identity
- sexual orientation
- **more contemporary measures of household & family relationships, including shared care of children.**

**Next Review of  
Census Topics is  
due in 2023.**



Just a few more things to consider and hopefully address.

*Without action there are no results.*

## Consider becoming a member.

We believe approximately 80% of all Kinship Carers in Tasmania are 'informal' carers. When lobbying to our State or Federal Government regarding this we need to produce facts. **Governments are swayed by numbers so the more members we have the more intently they will listen.**

**Membership is MINIMAL (\$10/annum for an Ordinary Member)** and we strongly encourage you to join. Your name and other personal details will be kept strictly confidential. If you are already a member, please encourage others to join.

Another huge help to us in presenting submissions for support and assistance is the inclusion of your stories. The details of these stories remain strictly anonymous, but they certainly grab the attention of recipients when accompanying submissions.



**So, please let us have your story to help in our fight to obtain the same benefits and support for every child who for whatever reason is unable to live with its parents. If you have a story for us, please forward it to the address at the beginning of this newsletter. We would love to hear from you and please be assured that no names will be divulged or any details in your story that you wish to be withheld. Stories can also be a beneficial part of a healing process. Please give it some thought .....**





KRK has been working with the Association of Children with Disability (ACD ) on a range of issues that will provide ongoing support to all kinship carers.

Leadership Group development with ACD is being undertaken to include a broad spectrum of participants from differing parts of Tasmania. Results to date have been reported as quite successful.

*Coming together is the beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.*

Kin Raising Kids TASMANIA Inc.  
 Current Committee Contact List  
 as at January 2023.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>PRESIDENT:</b>   |  |
|  | Garry Love (Margie)<br>E. President@kin4kids.org.au        |
| <b>IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT:</b>  |  |
|  | Ross Henderson<br>E. ross@kin4kids.org.au                  |
| <b>VICE PRESIDENT:</b>  |  |
|  | Lee Courto<br>E. lee.courto@kin4kids.org.au                |
| <b>PUBLICITY/COMMS. OFFICER:</b>  |  |
| VACANT  |  |
| <b>SECRETARY:</b>   |  |
|  | John Flack (Tracey) (S)<br>E. secretary@kin4kids.org.au    |
| <b>TREASURER:</b>   |  |
|  | Tonya Walker (Rodney) (NW)<br>E. Treasurer@kin4kids.org.au |
| <b>COMMITTEE MEMBERS:</b>   |  |
|  | Kylie Farrell (S)<br>E. kylie@kin4kids.org.au              |
|  | Jan Savage (NW)<br>E. Jan@kin4kids.org.au                  |
|  | Frank Tyers (Geraldine) (NW)<br>E. frank@kin4kids.org.au   |

**To all grandparent, kith and kinship carers, we are listening to you; we represent you and the problems you are experiencing.**

**Carers Recognition Bill 2022.**

This Bill passed through the Lower House of the Tasmania parliament late last year and will progress from here through the Upper House to become an ACT of Parliament.

Once passed it will finally recognise Informal Kinship Carers.



**For the benefit of the vulnerable children and young people for whom we care, children should be kept safe and supported with family members wherever possible, which has proved more successful than other forms of care.**

## Submissions welcome



### **CCYP investigation into changes to the allocation of Child Safety Officers for children and young people in Tasmania's Out-of-Home Care system**

I am writing to let you know that I have recently launched an own motion investigation into the introduction of a new Out-of-Home Care (OOHC) case management model which has changed the allocation of Child Safety Officers for children and young people in care in Tasmania. This has been identified as an emergent systemic issue warranting further investigation through my regular independent monitoring of the Tasmanian Out-of-Home Care system.

Under the new model, some children and young people in care are no longer allocated to an individual Child Safety Officer. Instead, these children and young people are allocated to teams (which include Child Safety Officers) within the Child Safety Service, with communication managed through a generic phone number and email address.

My investigation will be informed by the principles set out in the *Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2016* (Tas) (CCYP Act), and relevant provisions of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC) and the *Charter of Rights for Tasmanian children and young people in out of home care* (Charter).

The Terms of Reference for the investigation and a Submission Guide are available on my website ([CCYP investigation into the introduction of a new Out-of-Home Care case management model \(childcomm.tas.gov.au\)](http://childcomm.tas.gov.au)).

I am welcoming public submissions to inform the investigation. Hearing from those with experience of the model will help me to understand it better, and how it aligns with the rights of children. I will also be establishing mechanisms for children and young people with a care experience to have direct input into the investigation in the new year.

Should you have any questions regarding the investigation or how to provide a submission, please contact my office on (03) 6166 1366 or via [childcomm@childcomm.tas.gov.au](mailto:childcomm@childcomm.tas.gov.au).

Kind regards,  
Leanne McLean  
Commissioner for Children and Young People Tasmania