



Hibiscus Coast Grandparents Parenting Grandchildren Inc.

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Hello everyone,

It's just a few days before Christmas now and my goodness, has time flown! I find it hard to believe that it has already been 6 months since I joined the group. Before the year does come to an end, I really wanted to say to you all, that it has been a truly wonderful 6 months - spending this time getting to know you all, albeit slowly but surely, really has been a blessing to me. Thank you all for your acceptance, your patience while I've been learning the ropes & enduring a few hiccups along the way, and most of all your trust. I understand how difficult it can sometimes be; opening up about our lives and our fears to someone who you don't know very well. To have you trust in me with your feelings and talk to me about your worries or concerns has helped me to truly understand, and I appreciate the level of trust that you have shown in me to do that, thank you all so much. I feel like I'm forming some wonderful friendships within our group, and for that I am very grateful.

One of my goals for the first 6 months of this job was to try to make sure that each and every member of this group knew exactly why I wanted the job. When a family member takes on another family members child, it's a massive responsibility as we all know, and we're doing it for the betterment of the child, but we are often seen as the cause for the displacement or seen as the ones to blame. I've experienced this myself, often, and it's hard. It's a difficult position to be in and let's be honest, there is very little thanks from the members of our families for the most part. That can often be heart-breaking in itself - let alone the other heartbreaks we face along the way. Taking this job, I wanted to try to help you remember that you are valued, you are doing a wonderful thing for these children, and you are celebrated for it. Sadly, not often by many family members no, but most certainly by each other, and possibly something you didn't fully know, but by the community. Our community. And not only our own; it stretches far and wide, and THIS is what I wanted you to remember - that people really do care. The support we have been given of late, as you have seen, has been immense - these people have done this for us because they care. They genuinely care, and they genuinely appreciate us for what we're doing - this is WHY they're supporting us. Many acknowledge they couldn't do it themselves. They're aware of just how difficult it is, the sacrifices we all make. It's all very real, often a struggle, but oh-so rewarding when we remember that these innocent children are now out of harm's way and are safe and loved - by you. And they love you back. That is the beautiful simplicity of our reward. Love 

To cement that idea, please read here:

<https://www.grownups.co.nz/uncategorised/changing-role-grandparents/>

And watch the video clip here:

<https://youtu.be/5fBgRRhuWMU>

This is the interview with Bjorn our president at Maygrove Village, with residents Shirley and Gloria and managers Jeanne and Louise from Maygrove. Bjorn is talking about why we do what we do, Shirley and Gloria share their personal view and Jeanne and Louise explain why they feel this has worked so well. Amazing people! 😊

We have had tremendous support from the following agencies and I would like to thank them all very much: Youth in Transition, Dairy Flat Community Trust, Foster Hope Charitable Trust, Maygrove Village & Hopper Living Group, LoveSoup, Whangaparaoa Baptist Church & Coast Families, Northgate Baptist Church, City Impact Church, Apollo Kindergarten, Southern Stars, Rotary House Orewa, Future Whangaparaoa Trust & Whangaparaoa Community Hub, Chameleon TV, Steps Forward & Strengthening Families, Orewa Business Association & Destination Orewa Beach, Remuera Lions Club, Mediaworks Radio, TV and Digital and More FM Rodney.

To let you know, our group Hibiscus Coast Grandparents Parenting Grandchildren has now been advertised on the breakfast show at More FM Rodney, is now in general advertising in our local cafes & libraries by Chameleon TV and of course our YouTube clip and the GrownUps website from the Shoe Box Appeal we did with Maygrove Village, as well as Hibiscus Matters and The Rodney Times - oh, and our HBCGPG Facebook page is in its very early stages of publicity too! Now THAT'S a busy group ;)

Onto other matters 😊

Our Christmas Party was a lovely time spent, and quite a success I think (I did feel a bit sorry for Santa though haha - oh dear, note to self - wear elf britches next time! ;)). A bit of feedback from Bjorn was - I think we need MORE desserts next year Donna 😄 Gosh we DO like our desserts don't we lol - love it!! 😊 We've had some fantastic get-togethers at our Matakana meetings, monthly meetings and also our one-to-ones at home or out for a cuppa at a cafe or mall. I find these invaluable and feedback from some of our gran's around this is truly lovely, thank you. We've not only had our own Christmas party but have also been invited to not one, but two more! Orewa's Rotary House craft-inspired party was a brilliant idea, and I've even noted down a few ideas from them 😊 The gifts were incredible, and a lot of fun was had on the day. LoveSoup is hosting their Christmas Dinner on Sunday the 23rd and for those that are attending, I think a roast pork and hot ham meal is going to be a real treat. As a group I feel we are truly blessed to be invited to these occasions that are offered to us free of charge, just as a way of the community reaching out to us and to show us we're thought of. Really wonderful 💜

Maygrove Village really came through for us this Christmas, my goodness! It was most unexpected, but a whirlwind of activity came from our group being on their radar from last year, and then what started off as my return phone call to a lovely Maygrove resident called Brenda (who you will see in the video clip – she's wearing a red and white striped t-shirt) who offered up a couple of hand-knitted cardigans, to an impromptu meeting with Jeanne the Maygrove Village manager when I met with Brenda a week later, which then morphed into the very efficient and very focused Maygrove manager Louise getting the ball well and truly rolling for the Shoe Box Appeal! Not only did we get a shoe box gift set for every one of our grandchildren (you will see how many there were in the clip too), but also enough groceries to offer food parcels to each of our adult grandchildren! Furthermore, the

advertising that has come from this for both our group and for the village is incredible. A true testament to the commitment and generosity of Maygrove and their staff and residents to show us such a huge display of care and support. In addition to that, Hopper Developments Limited who partner with Maygrove, sponsored us \$1,500 to be spent on fuel vouchers for each of our families - just incredible, particularly at this time of year- they are in the mail folks, I do hope you receive them before Christmas! We sincerely thank them all, very very much for their support.

I must also mention Foster Hope Charitable Trust, believe it or not, another Louise, who very kindly offered our group brand new gifts! Even though it was after our Christmas party I quickly said yes please to these so I could offer you a little help in the gift department this year - I know how daunting gift shopping can be! Louise was more than happy to assist us with this so I filled my car not once, but twice, so their generosity was invaluable. I hope it helped you with that lovey shopping task haha :) In addition to the gifts from Foster Hope, Louise also aligned us with an organisation to partner with for brand new gifts as well, so a sincere thank you to Apollo Kindergarten for their support and to the other schools, agencies and businesses who all do collections for groups such as ours - it really is greatly received, thank you all.

So many people to thank and so SO many people to be grateful for, thank you all so very very much for your support. It has made a huge difference to our Christmas this year, and I thank you for showing the Grandparents and Grandchildren in our group just how much you care.

So folks, that brings our final newsletter to an end and 2018 is following very closely behind. As you all might know by now, I can talk for hours and there is still so much to say, but I think you may have had enough of my chatter by now haha. This way we'll have much to talk about at our first meeting in February 2019.

I wish you all a safe and peaceful Christmas. Please try to take some time out for yourselves if you're able to, and know that we're still available over the holiday period if you need us for any reason. If you're not able to reach me, then please get hold of Bjorn - we're more than happy to hear from you so please don't hesitate :)

To remind you, our numbers are:

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Or email - hbcgrandparentsinc@gmail.com

Take care of yourselves, love to you all and your grandie's.

Donna 