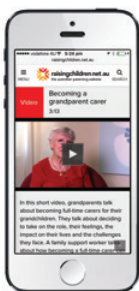


# Being a grandparent or kinship carer: a guide





**raisingchildren.net.au** offers free parenting videos, apps and articles backed by Australian experts. The website provides reliable and trusted information about pregnancy; child and teenage health, development, sleep, behaviour, nutrition, physical activity and safety; family relationships; disability; autism spectrum disorder; and services and support for parents and carers.

# Being a grandparent or kinship carer: a guide

If you're a grandparent or kinship carer, this Guide will help you to look after yourself and the children in your care.



This guide covers the following topics:

- Introduction: about grandparent and kinship carers
- Children in grandparent and kinship care
- Types of care arrangements
- Carer rights and responsibilities
- Taking care of yourself as a grandparent or kinship carer
- About grandparent and kinship carer groups
- Joining a grandparent or kinship carer group
- Starting a grandparent or kinship carer group
- Resources for grandparent or kinship carer groups
- Support for grandparent and kinship carers
- Useful phone numbers and contacts for grandparent and kinship carers



## Introduction: about grandparent and kinship carers

When children can't live with their parents, people in the family or family friends might become their primary carers. This is called grandparent or kinship care.

### Becoming a grandparent or kinship carer

Becoming a grandparent or kinship carer can be a big change for both you and the child. You might have had some idea that there was a problem in the child's family. Or perhaps the first sign of a problem was a call from the police or child protection authority to let you know the child needed care. Sometimes you might not know how long you'll be caring for the child. It can all be a big shock.

But you're not alone – it happens to thousands of grandparents, aunts, uncles, sisters, brothers, neighbours and friends across Australia.

### Your feelings about grandparent or kinship care

When you become a grandparent or kinship carer, it can be a time of very mixed feelings.

You might find it hard to go from being the 'fun' person in the child's life to being the person who has to set rules and boundaries. You might find taking children into your home causes conflict among other family members.


You might also feel:

- overwhelmed by how much new information and responsibility you have to cope with
- worried about the financial impact of taking on the care of a child
- angry and frustrated at being placed in this situation
- guilty because you think you're somehow to blame
- sad about the loss of plans for retirement and time for yourself
- uncertain about the future
- disappointed by the loss of some friendships because the child takes priority
- concerned you won't be able to manage the child, particularly if the child has some developmental delay or challenging behaviour.

It's **normal to feel lots of different emotions** when big changes like this happen in your family. Accepting this change can take time and lots of patience. You might choose to talk to family, friends or a counsellor about it.



I've watched them growing up and now  
I can't imagine my life without them.



**Grandparent and kinship carers say that there are many benefits and joys to raising children**



### **Benefits of being a grandparent or kinship carer**

Grandparent and kinship carers say that there are many benefits and joys to raising children. These include the chance to:

- be close to children as they grow – ‘I’ve watched them growing up and now I can’t imagine my life without them’
- feel reassured and confident that children are emotionally and physically safe, happy and cared for – ‘I think the main benefit for the grandchildren is the security and stability that they get’
- find a new lease on life – ‘They keep you younger because you’ve got to be more active and organised’.

### **Challenges of being a grandparent or kinship carer**

Being a grandparent or kinship carer is also challenging:

- It can be stressful to suddenly take children into your home. Sometimes it can cause tension or conflict among family members.
- The legal arrangements for children’s care can be complicated and confusing.
- The children might be sad, frightened or angry, which can cause difficult behaviour.
- You might be spending your savings or retirement funds on raising the children. Costs can be high, especially if the child has additional needs.
- Finding information might be difficult and frustrating.

## About children in grandparent or kinship care

When children come to live with you, they've experienced a major change in their lives, often as the result of a traumatic experience. Not only have they been separated from their parents, but they might also have had to move house, change schools, leave friends or separate from loved pets.

It's normal for children to feel angry, sad and worried. They might show their feelings in ways like withdrawal, behaviour problems, and clinginess. They might also find it hard to:

- feel safe
- sleep soundly
- trust others, make friends and develop social skills
- calm themselves down, manage emotions and regulate behaviour
- learn at school.

All children need to build a relationship with an adult they can trust. It might take time and a lot of patience for them to build this relationship with you. But as they develop this relationship and settle into your home, some of these issues might go away by themselves.

If you're worried about the children you're caring for, you should talk to your GP about a referral to a child psychologist.





# Types of care arrangements

Many different family issues can lead to a child needing care. Whatever the issue, there are three main types of grandparent or kinship care.

1

**An informal arrangement** is when there is an agreement with the child's family about caring for the child, without a court order like a child protection order or a family law order. These arrangements are often verbal. The child's parents are still the legal guardians so they have parental responsibility. Under an informal agreement, there are limits to the decisions a grandparent or kinship carer can make without parental consent.

2

**An informal arrangement plus a family law order** is an order from the Family Court. It lists who has parental responsibility for the child – for example, a grandparent or kinship carer – and can give some security about the caring arrangement. The Court can determine who has custody and guardianship of the child, who the child will live with, and who can have contact. A family law order is usually made when the family can't agree on the best custody and contact arrangements for the child.

3

**A formal arrangement with a child protection order** is when a child protection order is made by the state or territory Child Protection Court. A child protection order is used when there's been a report to the child protection authority about a child's safety and wellbeing. The Court determines who has parental responsibility and for how long. A grandparent or kinship carer can apply for full or shared parental responsibility. This arrangement gives the grandparent or kinship carer formal carer status, like foster carers have.

Eligibility for support and services varies depending on the type of care arrangement carers have.



**For grandparent and kinship carers, taking care of themselves is an important part of their caring role.**

## Carer rights and responsibilities

If you don't have court-granted guardianship, it can be hard to do basic things like give consent for services, get access to children's health records, or give permission for school excursions.

In most states and territories, you can sign an **Informal Caregivers Statutory Declaration** to make this situation easier. A Declaration shows that you have primary responsibility for a child's care.

You can get the Declaration form from local government offices, community legal centres, Health Services Commissioners, Disability Services Commissioners, education departments and family support agencies.

You can get help understanding your rights and responsibilities by calling a community legal service or the Legal Aid service in your state or territory (see the last section of this Guide for details).



# Taking care of yourself as a grandparent or kinship carer

Taking care of yourself is an important part of your caring role.

It can be hard to find time to take care of yourself, but when you do you're more likely to stay fit and well. This means you're better able to deal with life's ups and downs. You're also teaching the children in your life how to look after themselves by showing them what to do.

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**To see these courageous, wonderful, funny and resourceful kids happy, secure and thriving is worth whatever it takes to make it so.**

**Jeanette, kinship carer**

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## Tips for taking care of yourself

- Take some time for yourself, even if it's just 15 minutes each day doing something you enjoy – reading, going for a walk, or working in the garden.
- Make time for at least one regular activity of your own. You might need to look into child care to help you do this.
- Get reliable information about parenting and raising children from [raisingchildren.net.au](http://raisingchildren.net.au). This can help you feel more confident about stepping back into a caring role.
- Ask for help. Friends, family, local community organisations, schools, agencies and local services can all help you. Sometimes you might need help with little things like babysitting while you do the grocery shopping. Other times you might need help with bigger things like getting your child in to see a counsellor.



Staying connected with your friends and family is a very important part of taking care of yourself.



## Connecting with family and friends

Staying connected with your friends and family is a very important part of taking care of yourself.

Being a grandparent or kinship carer often means big changes to your social life. It might be harder to fit in a regular activity, see extended family or have a meal out with friends. It might take more organising and planning ahead to make it happen, but it's important not to lose touch with your friends and family.

## Connecting with cultural or religious groups

If you're a member of a cultural or religious group, find out about activities they have for children. Cultural celebrations, religious events or other activities can give you a chance to catch up with your friends. It can also help children learn about their cultural traditions and heritage.

## Managing family relationships

When it comes to family relationships, taking on the care of a child can have its ups and downs.

On the upside, you might find that your extended family looks for ways to come together, especially if there are other children the same age as yours. The downside might be that you have less time for your other grandchildren and family members because of your responsibilities. Not having you around as much might be a big change for them as well.

Many grandparent and kinship carers are also caring for the parent of the child. For example, as a grandparent carer you might be caring for your daughter as well as her child. Or you might be a kinship carer looking after your brother and his children. This sometimes makes family relationships even more strained and can be hard for everyone.

When you're ready you might find it helps to **talk to people close to you**, particularly your partner, if you have one, and close family. Try to listen and understand that other people might have completely different feelings from yours. Understanding each other and sharing the ups and downs can help you all through difficult times.

## Joining a group

Joining a group can be a great way of looking after yourself.

For example, if you have young children you could look into local playgroups for young children who haven't yet started school. At playgroups children do organised play activities together while their parents and carers supervise and socialise. To find a playgroup, call the Playgroup Australia state and territory toll-free number – 1800 171 882.

You could also consider joining a grandparent or kinship carer group.



It can be hard to know where to start. But help is available through a number of government and non-government agencies.



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I try to make sure the children see some of their family, so we spend a lot of time in the holidays travelling around, and we take lots of photos.

**Bernadette, grandmother**

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## About grandparent and kinship carer groups

A grandparent or kinship carer group is a group of carers who meet regularly to talk, share information and give each other support. It can be a chance to talk with people who really understand your situation. Some people only go to groups a few times, and others go regularly for years.

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**It's nice to get together and have a cup of tea with others who are in the same boat.**

**Rachel, grandmother carer**

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Being part of a grandparent or kinship carer group has lots of benefits. You can:

- learn about the services available to you and the children in your care
- get lots of useful information about being a carer and helping children develop and grow
- feel more connected and less isolated
- share stories and get advice from people who've had similar experiences to you
- give the children in your care an opportunity to connect with other children in the same situation, so they feel less isolated.


### Types of grandparent and kinship carer groups

There are different types of groups. You can choose the type of group that works for you:

- **Casual groups** are grandparent or kinship carers who know each other and decide to meet up sometimes to talk and share experiences.
- **Facilitated groups** are more formal and have someone who organises things like venues, times, resources, invitations and guest speakers.
- **Online groups** are chat rooms or forums where you talk and share information online instead of meeting in person.
- **Specific groups** are for families with particular needs – for example, families with children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or disability.



Share stories and get advice from people who have had similar experiences to you.



If starting your own group interests you, it's a good idea to think about what you want a group to achieve.



## Joining a grandparent or kinship carer group

There are lots of existing grandparent and kinship carer groups across Australia. Although they're all different, they all have the common aim of sharing information and supporting grandparent and kinship carers.

There are lots of ways to find out about groups in your area:

- Call the Australian Government Department of Human Services Grandparent Adviser Line on **1800 245 965**.
- Contact the seniors information service in your state or territory. Type 'seniors information service' and the name of your state into an internet search engine.
- Contact your local community centre or council. Find the number in the phone book or by searching online.
- Ask at your GP surgery, child and family health service, school or preschool.
- Call Playgroup Australia on **1800 171 882** and ask about playgroups for children living with grandparent or kinship carers.
- Search the Raising Children Network My Neighbourhood tool at [raisingchildren.net.au/myneighbourhood](http://raisingchildren.net.au/myneighbourhood).

# Starting a grandparent or kinship carer group

If there isn't a group near you and you know some grandparent or kinship carers who want to get together, you could form your own group.

If starting your own group interests you, it's a good idea to think about what you want a group to achieve. For example, you might want the group to:

- share information
- provide emotional support for you and other carers
- learn new ideas about raising children
- hear experts talk about useful topics
- be a public voice for grandparent and kinship carers.

You might also think about whether you want to meet face to face, or in an online forum or chat group, or both.

Thinking about these questions will help you decide what type of group you want:

- a casual group focussed on talking and sharing experiences together
- a formal group that invites guest speakers and distributes information.

## Setting up a casual group

This is reasonably easy because you don't have to worry about hiring a room, writing an agenda and booking guest speakers. People in these groups usually take turns meeting in each other's homes or a local café. You just need to organise the time and location, and then let people know.

If your group is large and you're meeting in a café, it's a good idea to make a booking. Some cafés offer discounted group rates for seniors, so ask around.



## Setting up a facilitated group

This is more complicated and takes some thought and planning.

To start with, you might be able to **get help with setting up and funding** a group:

- Call your state or territory kinship care association. Ask about what you should do to get started and who can help. You could also contact an existing group somewhere else in your state to find out what they do.
- Contact your local council or community centre to find out whether you can get community funding. Ask about other ways they can help – for example, can they offer resources like printing and photocopying, someone to help with organising, or a group facilitator?
- Organise a way to manage the costs if there are any. Will your group be funded by one individual? Will there be a membership cost? Will you apply for a grant from your local council?

It's important to think about practical things like **where and when to meet**:

- Contact your local council and find out about meeting in neighbourhood houses, child and family health centres, community halls, senior citizen club rooms or libraries. These venues are often centrally located, accessible and affordable or free.
- Talk to a local school principal about using school facilities to meet.
- Look into other venues – for example, places of worship, sporting clubs, scout or guide halls, cultural club rooms, leisure centres or child care centres.
- Find out whether your venue provides a kettle and cups for tea and coffee. In some cases, you might need to provide these yourself. You can save costs by asking everyone to bring something to share.
- Ask whether the venue has indemnity insurance. This will cover you if there's an accident while you're meeting.
- Choose a time when the venue is available and one that works for as many of your potential members as possible.

It's also good to plan for **communication and advertising**:

- Think about how you'll communicate with your group. This might be by home phone, mobile phones, email, Facebook pages or other social media.
- Think about how you'll advertise the group if you want more members. You could put up notices at schools, child care centres, child protection agencies, GPs, community centres, libraries and shopping centres. A local radio station or newspaper might be interested in putting out a community announcement.

Some groups go through a legal process called **incorporation**, which makes the group a legal entity with separate bank accounts. You might do this if your group wants to do some fundraising. There are advantages and disadvantages to being incorporated, and you should get legal advice from your community legal centre or state legal aid commission or service before you do this.

## Running a facilitated group

The first time your group meets, talk about **appointing roles**. If the responsibility for everything in the group falls on one person, it can become very time consuming and overwhelming, especially as the group begins to grow.

For example, think about who will be responsible for:

- booking the venue
- setting the dates
- sending reminders
- organising refreshments
- managing finances
- organising discussion topics or guest speakers
- responding to enquiries from new members.

## Running meetings in a facilitated group

Think about how you want to run your meetings. Setting an agenda can be as simple as making a list of the things you want to do in the group and allocating a reasonable amount of time to each item. For example, you could:

- start with a welcome for any new members
- discuss any group issues that have come up since your last meeting
- discuss the topic for the day
- finish with a plan for the next meeting.

It's a good idea to appoint someone to run each meeting. This person's role is to help everyone stay on track, make sure everyone gets an opportunity to speak, and make sure you finish on time.

It's also a good idea to talk in advance about how to solve **problems** if they come up in the group or in meetings. You might agree to focus on being positive rather than complaining. And if people are angry in a group, a good rule is to listen more than speak.



## Resources for grandparent or kinship carer groups

You can get a lot of free information on the internet, but it's important to use information only from sources you can trust. A good rule is to stick to websites endorsed by governments, not-for-profit organisations or universities.

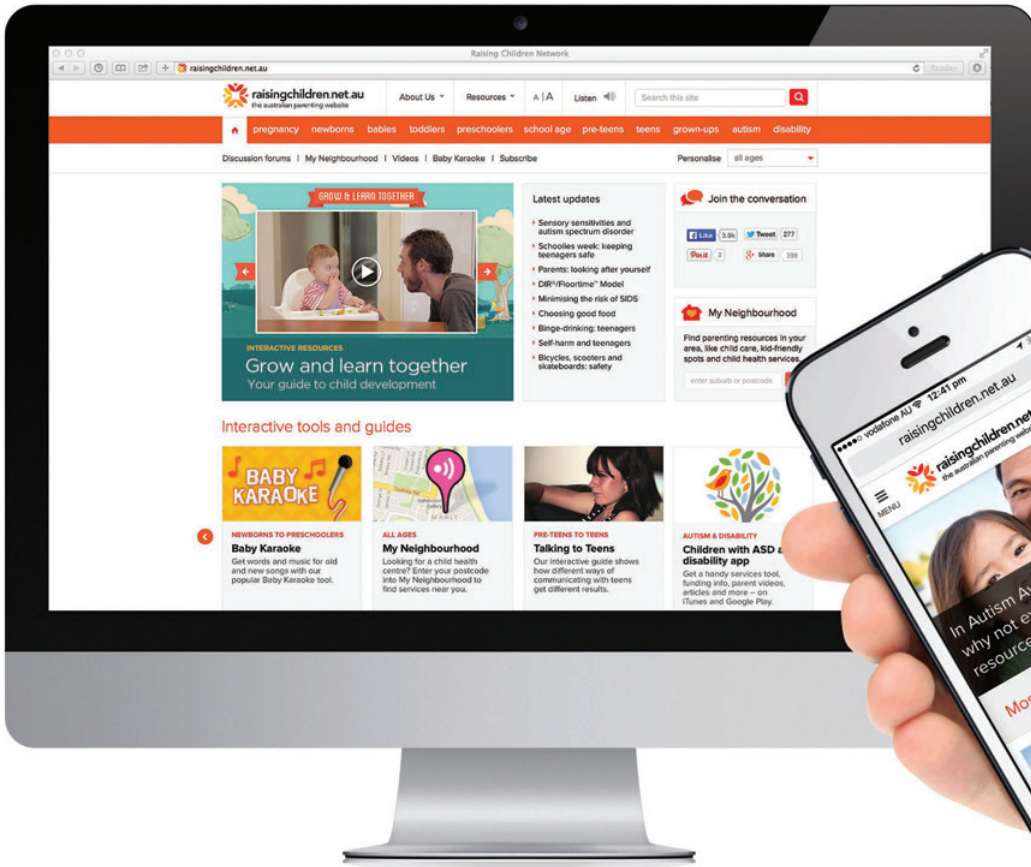
You can contact relevant professionals in your local community for information and advice – for example, try GPs, paediatricians and family support agencies.

**raisingchildren.net.au** has accurate and reliable information on a comprehensive range of topics related to raising babies, children and teenagers, and looking after yourself as a parent or carer. Topics include:

- behaviour – for example, tantrums, difficult behaviour, lies, sharing, discipline
- communication – for example, bonding with babies, talking and listening with children of all ages, negotiating with teenagers, conflict management, problem-solving
- development – for example, toilet training, self-esteem, what to expect at different ages, social and emotional development in adolescence, puberty
- health – for example, common childhood and teenage ailments, trauma in children
- nutrition and healthy lifestyle – for example, healthy food choices, fussy eating, physical activity, alcohol and other drugs
- play and learning – for example, play ideas, reading, literacy and numeracy, screen time, preschool, primary school, high school, bullying
- safety – for example, safe sleeping, home safety, car and pedestrian safety, internet safety
- sleep – for example, baby sleep problems, children's sleep routines, teenage sleep changes
- family life – for example, family routines, chores, pocket money
- grandparent and kinship carers – for example, law and money, services, friendships, taking care of yourself
- disability – for example, early intervention and therapies, disability services, anti-discrimination law, school support, National Disability Insurance Scheme
- services – for example, multicultural, mental health, legal and financial, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, government, parent and family, child health, teenage, and drug and alcohol services.



**raisingchildren.net.au**  
the australian parenting website



Free parenting videos, apps and articles  
backed by Australian experts



# Support for grandparent and kinship carers

It's important to know that you can get support in your role as a grandparent or kinship carer – and it's OK to ask for help.

## Support from the Australian Government Department of Human Services

Department of Human Services Grandparent Advisers are a great place to start. They support both grandparents and kinship carers and can:

- give you information about payments, services and support in your area
- refer you to community service providers in your area.

Call the Grandparent Adviser Line on **1800 245 965** (callers with hearing or speech impairment can call 1800 810 586).

You can find out more about **financial and other support** for grandparent and kinship carers by going to the Australian Government Department of Human Services website, and typing 'support for non-parent carers' into the search bar.

## Support for raising children

If you need help with raising the children in your care, you can call the parenting helpline in your state or territory.

Find a list of helpline numbers in the last section of this Guide. [raisingchildren.net.au](http://raisingchildren.net.au) also has practical, reliable and up-to-date information about raising babies, children and teenagers and looking after yourself as a carer.

## Support for yourself or your children

If you need help with personal issues, your GP is a good person to talk to. If you need to speak to someone urgently, call Lifeline on 131 114, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Most states and territories have **organisations that support children** who can't live with their parents. These organisations hold events where children can meet others who are in the same situation. See the last section of this Guide for a list of organisations in your state or territory that offer support.

# Grandparent and kinship care: in pictures

## Being a kinship carer or grandparent carer



Grandparent or kinship care is when a child can't live with his parents. A responsible relative or friend cares for him instead.



Being a carer can be good for you and the child. You can give the child a safe and loving home to grow up in.



Becoming a grandparent or kinship carer is a big change. But you aren't alone, and you can get lots of help.

## Support groups for grandparent and kinship carers



Support groups for grandparent or kinship carers get you together with people in the same situation as you.



If you know other carers, you could start your own support group, just to talk and share experiences.



Your grandparent adviser or community centre can help you join or start a support group.

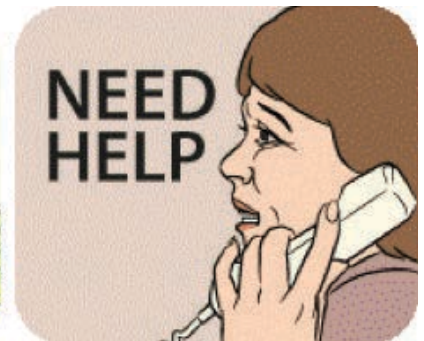
## Looking after yourself as a grandparent or kinship carer



Remember to look after yourself. When you're well and happy, you're in good shape to care for a child.



Try to get enough sleep, do some exercise and eat well. Time for yourself each day is good too.



Talk to an adviser, friends or family. **Call the Grandparent Adviser Line on 1800 245 965.**



# Useful phone numbers and contacts for carers and service providers

## National

**Australian Government Department of Human Services Centrelink Indigenous phone service – [www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/centrelink-indigenous-phone-service](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/centrelink-indigenous-phone-service) or **1800 136 380****

This telephone service provides information for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Centrelink clients about specific Centrelink payments and services.

**Australian Government Department of Human Services Grandparent Adviser Line – [www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/grandparent-advisers](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/grandparent-advisers) or **1800 245 965** (callers with hearing or speech impairment can call **1800 810 586**)**

This telephone service provides support for grandparent and kinship carers, including information about payments, support services and referrals.

**Australian Government Department of Human Services Centrelink Multilingual phone service – [www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/multilingual-phone-service](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/multilingual-phone-service) or **131 202****

This telephone service provides information in different languages about payments and services for Centrelink clients.

**Australian Government Department of Human Services Support for non-parent carers – [www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/support-non-parent-carers](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/support-non-parent-carers)**

This webpage has information about payments and services for grandparents, legal guardians and other family members who provide full-time care for children.

**Beyond Blue – [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au) or **1300 224 636****

Beyond Blue provides information on depression, anxiety and related disorders. It also has information about treatment and referrals to relevant services.

**CREATE Foundation – [www.create.org.au](http://www.create.org.au) or **1800 655 105****

CREATE Foundation represents children and young people who are in out-of-home-care, including children in kinship or grandparent care. It also provides programs and services to help these children.

**Family Relationships Advice Line – [www.familyrelationships.gov.au](http://www.familyrelationships.gov.au) or **1800 050 321****

This telephone service helps families affected by relationship or separation issues.

**Kids Helpline – [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au) or **1800 551 800****

This is a free telephone, email and web counselling service for young people aged 5-25 years.

**Raising Children Network grandparent and kinship carer online forum – [raisingchildren.net.au/carerforum](http://raisingchildren.net.au/carerforum)**

Grandparent and kinship carers can use this forum to share stories and ideas with other people in similar situations.

**Raising Children Network My Neighbourhood – [raisingchildren.net.au/myneighbourhood](http://raisingchildren.net.au/myneighbourhood)**

This online tool helps users find grandparent and kinship care groups or other useful services in local areas.

## **Australian Capital Territory**

**ACT Child and Youth Protection Services – [www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocys/child-and-youth-protection-services](http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocys/child-and-youth-protection-services) or – 1300 556 729**

This is the Australian Capital Territory's statutory child protection agency. It coordinates government services for children and young people believed to be at risk of harm or abuse.

**Barnardos Australia – [www.barnardos.org.au/what-we-do/foster-care-kinship-care-adoption/kinship-care](http://www.barnardos.org.au/what-we-do/foster-care-kinship-care-adoption/kinship-care) or 1800 066 757**

This child protection service provides support and services to children who can't live with their parents because of abuse or neglect. It also supports kinship carers.

**Legal Aid ACT – [www.legalaidact.org.au](http://www.legalaidact.org.au) or 1300 654 314**

Legal Aid ACT helps people in the ACT with legal problems, especially people who are socially or economically disadvantaged.

**Marymead – [www.marymead.org.au/services/grandparents-group](http://www.marymead.org.au/services/grandparents-group) or (02) 6162 5800**

This organisation supports grandparents raising grandchildren. It offers information and runs group meetings.

**Parentline ACT – [www.parentlineact.org.au](http://www.parentlineact.org.au) or (02) 6287 3833**

Parentline provides telephone counselling by trained volunteers for parents and carers.



## New South Wales

**Barnardos Australia – [www.barnardos.org.au/what-we-do/foster-care-kinship-care-adoption/kinship-care](http://www.barnardos.org.au/what-we-do/foster-care-kinship-care-adoption/kinship-care) or **1800 066 757****

This child protection service provides support and services to children who can't live with their parents because of abuse or neglect. It also supports kinship carers.

**Child Protection Helpline – [www.community.nsw.gov.au/preventing-child-abuse-and-neglect/protecting-children](http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/preventing-child-abuse-and-neglect/protecting-children) or **132 111****

Call this number to report a child or young person at risk of harm from abuse or neglect. The Helpline is staffed by professionally qualified caseworkers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Connecting Carers NSW – [www.connectingcarersnsw.com.au](http://www.connectingcarersnsw.com.au) or **1300 794 653****

This organisation supports foster, kinship and relative carers across New South Wales.

**Legal Aid NSW – [www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au) or **1300 888 529****

Legal Aid NSW helps disadvantaged clients across New South Wales with legal problems in most areas of criminal, family and civil law.

**Mirabel Foundation – [www.mirabelfoundation.org.au](http://www.mirabelfoundation.org.au) or **(03) 9527 9422****

This organisation helps children who are orphaned or abandoned because of parental illicit drug use and who are now in the care of extended family. Mirabel runs kinship carer support groups in New South Wales.

**Parent Line NSW – [www.parentline.org.au](http://www.parentline.org.au) or **1300 130 052****

Parent Line NSW is a confidential telephone advice and information service for parents and carers of children aged 0-18 years. Trained professional counsellors offer support and information.

**Samaritans – [www.samaritans.org.au/service/kinship-care-grandparents-as-parents](http://www.samaritans.org.au/service/kinship-care-grandparents-as-parents) or **(02) 4969 7886****

This organisation offers training, workshops and peer support groups for kinship carers.

## Northern Territory

**Carer Community – [www.carercommunity.nt.gov.au](http://www.carercommunity.nt.gov.au) or 1800 814 599**

Visit this website or call the helpline to find out about becoming a grandparent or kinship carer in the Northern Territory. The website also has resources and information for carers.

**NT Child Abuse Hotline – [www.nt.gov.au/law/crime/report-child-abuse](http://www.nt.gov.au/law/crime/report-child-abuse) or 1800 700 250**

Call this number to report a child or young person at risk of harm from abuse or neglect.

**NT Legal Aid Commission – [www.ntlac.nt.gov.au](http://www.ntlac.nt.gov.au) or 1800 019 343**

The Legal Aid Helpline helps NT residents understand legal problems and options. The service is available regardless of financial circumstances.

**Parentline – [www.parentline.com.au](http://www.parentline.com.au) or 1300 301 300**

This confidential telephone counselling service offers free professional counselling and support for parents and carers.

## Queensland

**Child safety service centres – [www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety/about-us/contact-us/child-safety-service-centres](http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety/about-us/contact-us/child-safety-service-centres)**

These centres ensure children's safety and wellbeing and work to prevent children from being harmed. Contact a local centre to report a child at risk. After hours, call 1800 177 135.

**Foster Care Queensland – [www.fcq.com.au](http://www.fcq.com.au) or call (07) 3256 6166**

This child protection organisation supports children and young people in foster or kinship care.

**Grandparents Information – [www.grandparentsqld.com.au](http://www.grandparentsqld.com.au) or call 1300 135 500**

This telephone information service provides information about support groups for grandparent carers. The website also has an information resource directory for grandparents in Queensland.

**Legal Aid Queensland – [www.legalaid.qld.gov.au/Home](http://www.legalaid.qld.gov.au/Home) or 1300 651 188**

Legal Aid Queensland offers advice to financially disadvantaged Queenslanders about criminal, family and civil law matters.

**Parentline – [www.parentline.com.au](http://www.parentline.com.au) or 1300 301 300**

This confidential telephone counselling service offers free professional counselling and support for parents and carers.



## South Australia

**Child Abuse Report Line – [www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse](http://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse) or **131 478****

Call this number to report a child or young person at risk of harm from abuse or neglect.

**Connecting Foster & Kinship Carers SA – [www.cfc-sa.org.au](http://www.cfc-sa.org.au) or call **1800 732 272****

This is the peak body for foster and kinship carers in South Australia. It provides support and services to children, young people and carer families.

**Grandparents for Grandchildren SA – [www.gfgsa.com.au](http://www.gfgsa.com.au) or call **(08) 8212 1937****

This community service organisation provides a range of services to grandparents who are worried about the welfare of their grandchildren. It also supports grandparents by providing practical and emotional support and referral services.

**Legal Services Commission of South Australia – [www.lsc.sa.gov.au](http://www.lsc.sa.gov.au) or **1300 366 424****

The Commission provides free legal advice and assistance through its telephone advice line and face-to-face appointments.

**Parent Helpline – [www.decd.sa.gov.au/parenting-and-child-care/parenting/parenting-sa/parent-information-and-support](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/parenting-and-child-care/parenting/parenting-sa/parent-information-and-support) or **1300 364 100****

This is a confidential telephone information service for parents and carers with children aged 0-12 years.

## Tasmania

**Child Safety Services - [www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/children/child\\_protection\\_services](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/children/child_protection_services) or **1300 737 639****

Call this number to report a child or young person at risk of harm from abuse or neglect.

**Foster and Kinship Carers Association Tasmania – [www.fkat.org.au](http://www.fkat.org.au) or call **1800 149 994****

This organisation offers support and information to foster carers, kinship carers and people interested in becoming carers.

**Legal Aid Commission of Tasmania – [www.legalaid.tas.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.tas.gov.au) or **1300 366 611****

The Commission offers free legal advice over the phone, as well as free face-to-face advice at its legal clinics.

**Parent Line – [www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/service\\_information/children\\_and\\_families/parentline](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/service_information/children_and_families/parentline) or **1300 808 178****

This telephone information and support service helps parents and carers with stressful parenting issues and concerns.

## Victoria

**Child Protection – [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/children,-families-and-young-people/child-protection/child-protection-contacts](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/children,-families-and-young-people/child-protection/child-protection-contacts)**

Call a local child protection service to report a child at risk of neglect or abuse. After hours, call the Child Protection Emergency Service on 131 278.

**Kinship Carers Victoria – [www.kinshipcarersvictoria.org](http://www.kinshipcarersvictoria.org) or (03) 9372 2422**

Kinship Carers Victoria provides support for kinship and grandparent carers across Victoria.

**Mirabel Foundation – [www.mirabelfoundation.org.au](http://www.mirabelfoundation.org.au) or (03) 9527 9422**

This organisation helps children who are orphaned or abandoned because of parental illicit drug use and who are now in the care of extended family.

**Victoria Legal Aid – [www.legalaid.vic.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au) or 1300 792 387**

This service provides free legal information and advice.

**Parentline Victoria – [www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/Pages/parentline.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/Pages/parentline.aspx) or 132 289**

This is a telephone counselling service for parents and carers of children aged 0-18 years. Professional counsellors can help with a wide range of parenting issues.

## Western Australia

**Department for Child Protection and Family Support – [www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Pages/Home.aspx](http://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Pages/Home.aspx) or 1800 622 258**

Call this number with concerns about a child's safety or welfare.

**Legal Aid WA – [www.legalaid.wa.gov.au/Pages/Default.aspx](http://www.legalaid.wa.gov.au/Pages/Default.aspx) or 1300 650 579**

Legal Aid offers information and a range of legal services, particularly for disadvantaged people.

**Mission Australia – [www.missionaustralia.com.au](http://www.missionaustralia.com.au) or (08) 9225 0400 (WA state office)**

This organisation supports grandparent and kinship carers.

**Ngala – [www.ngala.com.au](http://www.ngala.com.au) or 1800 111 546**

This organisation helps parents, grandparents and carers develop skills and cope with the challenges of parenting.

**Wanslea Grandcare – [www.wanslea.asn.au/children-and-family/grandcare](http://www.wanslea.asn.au/children-and-family/grandcare) or 1800 008 323**

This agency provides information and support to grandparent carers in Perth and southern Western Australia.