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JANUARY 2026

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Mike's message

Election commitments: What our carers need now

Our message to all political parties is simple: Grandparent and other Informal Kinship Carers are holding families together under immense pressure, and they need practical, funded support.

Informal Kinship Carers step in during crisis, often with no notice, taking on full parenting responsibilities, generally later in life. In doing so, they save the state tens of millions of dollars by keeping children out of the formal care system.

Too many are struggling financially, emotionally and physically with limited support. Our submission sets out three achievable election commitments that would deliver immediate, real-world benefits for carers and the children they raise.

1. Fund grandparent carers

Informal grandparent carers receive no ongoing financial assistance from the state government, despite bearing the full cost of raising children, whilst keeping them out of the overburdened Foster Care and Child Protection systems. Many are relying on their pensions, drawing down superannuation, or going without essentials to make ends meet.

We are calling for a **dedicated allowance for informal grandparent carers** that reflects their role in ensuring children are provided with a safe and nurturing home life whilst remaining connected to their family and heritage.

2. Increase operational funding for Grandcarers SA

Demand for Grandcarers SA services continues to grow, but our operational funding has not kept pace. Carers are reaching out for help in increasingly

complex situations requiring more help, time and resources from our small support agency.

Increased operational funding would ensure that we do not have to reduce frontline services and ensure carers are supported when they need it, not when capacity allows.

3. Subsidise the costs of a Social Worker(s)

Grandparents and kinship carers who provide care to children through formal Department for Child Protection arrangements already have the advantage of being supported by Kinship Care Support Workers who have regular face to face contact with their clients.

Informal Kinship Carers and the children in their care often experience trauma, behavioural challenges and legal uncertainty. An ongoing professional social worker resource in Grandcarers SA would enhance the lives and wellbeing of our clients by providing regular, face-to-face and home visit support to help clients provide the best care they can to the children and young people in their care.

Subsidising a social worker would provide early, trauma-informed support, reduce escalation, and improve long-term outcomes for families.

Grandparent carers are doing the work of the child protection system with little recognition and even less support. These election commitments are practical, affordable and overdue. If governments are serious about protecting children and supporting families, this is where they must act.

Grandparent carers have stepped up for their families and their community. This election, we are calling on government to step up for them.

Mike Feszczak
CEO Grandcarers SA





A great day out to remember

Opportunities like this don't come around often, chances for our Grandcarers and the children in their care to simply enjoy a great day out together, free from worry and financial pressure.

Thanks to the generosity of the **State Government**, through the **Hon Katrine Hildyard MP**, Minister for Child Protection, several Grandcarers SA families were able to attend the **Adelaide Grand Final (Motorsport)**, an experience many could only dream of.

For these families, it wasn't just about cars and racing. It was about inclusion, shared joy, and creating memories that will last a lifetime. A day at the races meant being part of something big, soaking up the atmosphere, and feeling, even just for a moment, like everyone else in the crowd.

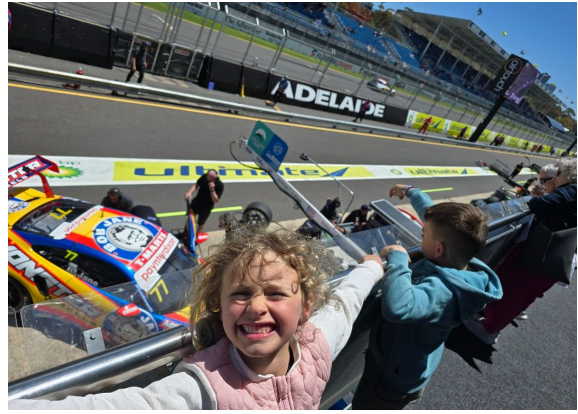
Among those attending were Andrei and Hunter, who were taken by their Grandcarer, Donna. The excitement on their faces said it all. Andrei summed up the day perfectly, declaring, "This is the best day of my life," while Hunter enthusiastically added, "It was a fantastic Grand Final."

Moments like these remind us why practical support matters. For many Grandcarer-led families, experiences like this are simply out of reach without help. We are deeply grateful for the support that made this day possible and for recognising that sometimes the greatest gift you can give a child, and their carer, is the chance to feel included, celebrated, and joyful.

It truly was a great day out, and one our families won't forget anytime soon.



Andrei and Hunter got close to some of the racing cars.



Hunter shows her joy whilst Andrei watches the cars below.



Great Christmas Giveaway 2025

One of the biggest and most demanding projects we take on each year is the Great Christmas Giveaway, and it's also one of the most rewarding.

All year long, we quietly source gifts from whoever and wherever we can. Some come through **Good360**, others through personal donations, and as Christmas approaches the generosity ramps up. This year we were supported with donations from **Backpacks 4 SA Kids**, **Victor Harbor Library**, **Nadia Clancy MP**, the **Zonta Club of Adelaide** and **Hinkler Books**. For the second year running, the team from the **Commonwealth Bank's King William Street branch** also stepped in, providing both gifts and much-needed help with sorting.

Once December hit, the real work began. Every gift had to be sorted, matched and packed (by age, gender and interests), for each individual child. It's detailed, time-consuming work, and it all had to be done before collections began.

The outcome made it worthwhile. More than 200 children received Christmas presents they otherwise would not have had, at a time of year that places enormous financial pressure, emotional strain and anxiety on many Grandcarers.

Our team never takes this lightly. We see firsthand what these gift packs mean, relief, gratitude, and the simple joy of knowing the children in their care won't miss out at Christmas.

To everyone who donated gifts, time, energy or support: thank you. This was a massive effort for a small team, and it simply wouldn't happen without you.



Operations Coordinator Joanne checking a small selection of the prepared gift bags.



Commonwealth Bank and Grandcarers SA team members pause whilst sorting gifts.



Our bi-annual Client Survey

An article in our December 2025 Newsletter asked you to

complete our end of year R2D2 Survey.

This is a requirement of our major funder. Without sufficient survey results we can't let our funders know what you need and it places a question mark over our future.

The more responses we get, the better equipped we are to respond to carers needs and government expectations.

To complete our survey click on the button below and submit by **Monday 12 January 2026**.

Please help us to help you!

[CLICK HERE TO COMPLETE OUR SURVEY](#)



Information

Join us for free at Camp Elevate!

Do you have a child in your care aged between 13 and 17 years? Would you like them to experience a free camping and adventure weekend with Scouts SA? If the answer to both questions is 'Yes', then read on.

Thanks to the success of two previously held camps and a grant from the Department of Education, Grandcarers SA is working with **Scouts SA** to deliver an adventure camp for children in the care of our Grandcarers (who can also get a little involved on the final morning).

This camp will take place at the **Woodhouse Adventure Park** between the evening of **Friday 27 February** and the morning of **Sunday 1 March 2026**. If you are interested in finding out more—no commitment—please email us

via the button below by Friday 9 January 2026, using the subject heading 'Camp Elevate'.

CAMP ELEVATE

AGES 13-17

.....
**27 FEBRUARY to
01 MARCH 2026
WOODHOUSE
ADVENTURE PARK**
.....



ACTIVITIES:

- Geocaching
- Hiking
- Cooking
- Outdoor Survival
- Labyrinth Maze
- Challenge Hill
- Outdoor Games
- Water Activities



[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER YOUR INTEREST IN CAMP ELEVATE](#)



2026 Villages resume in February

[CLICK HERE FOR EVENTS & VILLAGE CALENDAR 2026](#)



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Grandcarers SA is registered as a charity
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