

grandparents
VICTORIA



Annual Report 2020 -2021



GPV is supported by donors, life members and ordinary financial members

KCV is supported by the Victorian Government

Key words which influence GPV/KCV approaches are:

- Truthfulness
- Confidentiality
- Inclusiveness
- Integrity
- Constancy
- Gratitude
- Commitment
- Compassion

14 Youlden Street Kensington 3031
Ph: (03) 9372 2422
Email: director@grandparents.com.au
www.grandparents.com.au
www.kinshipcarersvictoria.org
ABN: 54 173 492 849
Incorporated No: A0041212Z

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1...Introduction to the 2020/21 Financial Year

The COVID-19 pandemic, which changed the way that GPV/KCV operated towards the end of the 2019-20 financial year, continued to impact the operations of the organisation in 2020-21. First identified in Wuhan, China in December 2019, the virus reached Australian shores in late January 2020, and was declared a global pandemic on March 11, 2020. Travel restrictions were implemented and Australian borders closed to all non-residents on 20 March, with mandatory hotel quarantine introduced a week later.

During the course of the 2020-21 financial year, Melbourne endured 3 periods of lockdown, with a range of restrictions limiting the permitted reasons for leaving home, banning operation of non-essential work and services. Many days of GPV/KCV outreach visits across Victoria were lost: Early July to late October 2020 (112 days), Mid-February 2021 (5 days), Late May to early June 2021 (14 days)

Victoria was in lockdown for a total of 21 weeks of the financial year (40%). Of a possible 237 working days, 110 were lost to lockdowns. Even outside these lockdown periods, ongoing gathering restrictions continued with GPV/KCV impacted by:

- Restrictions on the number of attendees permitted at public gatherings (such as forums, support group meetings, and face to face board meetings)
- Restrictions on the number of people permitted on-site in office spaces
- Restrictions on travel between metropolitan Melbourne and regional areas.

These restrictions perpetuated the loss of opportunities to meet face to face with members and staff, especially with kinship carers who were of particular concern. GPV/KCV had to find alternative ways to maintain connections with all members and ensure that kinship carers were supported.

Telephone contact became the main method of contact, with staff spending more time than ever before on the phones. When the number of incoming calls to the office unexpectedly decreased at the beginning of the pandemic, GPV/KCV staff began a program of calling kinship carers to check in on them.

One of the gathering events most affected by COVID-19 lockdowns was the 2020 Kinship Carers' Week. In 2019, Kinship Carers' Week was celebrated with public gatherings across the state. In 2020 this was impossible to repeat as Victoria was in the midst of the second wave of strict lockdowns as a result of the pandemic. Nevertheless, a fourth edition of the *Kinship Carers' Wellbeing Magazine* was produced and distributed to carers in recognition of Kinship Carers' Week. Further, GPV/KCV staff conducted a phone survey to determine what strategies kinship carers were using to help them cope with the ongoing lockdowns in Melbourne. The results included an array of activities encompassing categories such as work and study from home, maintaining connections remotely with family and friends, and maintaining self-care.

The most common issues raised by kinship carers during the pandemic included:

- The challenges of home-schooling the children and young people in their care
- Understanding how the rapidly changing restrictions affected them and their families
- Concerns about how lockdowns and gathering restrictions might impact reunification proceedings

A communique issued by GPV/KCV in July 2020 noted that lockdowns and gathering restrictions were greatly impacting the process of reunification for many families. Of key concern were:

- Suspension of services making it difficult for parents to meet reunification conditions
- Delays to court proceedings making it difficult for families to meet reunification deadlines
- The ability of children and young people to have interactions with their parents in the transition period.

GPV/KCV staff adapted to the new methods of work well and have realised that some new ways for working could stay:

- Phone calls diverted to a staff member's mobile
- Staff contacting one another via phone and email, with occasional use of conference calls as needed
- Meetings with stakeholders conducted remotely via conference calls
- Staff members accessing the computer system remotely

1...Campaigns

GPV/KCV campaigns in order to demand change.

Campaign activity has been underway since 2002. Despite the anticipation of slow or no progress, and because the nexus between issues raised in the campaigns and the life chances of children is so tight, GPV/KCV feels duty bound to battle on.

Campaigns are always designed to raise public awareness and influence individual action, as well as to influence government/agency policy and practices. In order to meet these lofty aims, GPV/KCV has employed a range of strategies designed to ensure the message is heard by the people who need to hear it. Most campaigns have been started with a letter to relevant decision-makers, and some have involved following up with other strategies as well. Some campaigns relied on multiple strategies being in play at the same time. Strategies employed were:

- Letters to politicians and other decision-makers
- Meetings with politicians and other decisionmakers
- Postcard campaigns
- Individual action by grandparents
- Publication of position papers
- Media events
- Joint action with other agencies

Some campaigns advocated for changes to legislation in order to strengthen child and family rights, while others called for families to be better assisted through support programs.

In the 2020/21 FY eight campaigns were underway.

1.1...Alcohol Labelling

This campaign was designed to highlight boundaries that should be placed on the sale of alcohol. Whilst the GPV/KCV Board agreed not to call for a total ban on the home delivery of alcohol,

it called for a set of measures that should be introduced including to:

- Introduce a delay of two hours between order and delivery, to stop rapid supply of alcohol to people who may be intoxicated or dealing with alcohol dependence
- Limit alcohol deliveries to between 10am-10pm, to reduce the known risks of alcohol-fuelled family violence and suicide which peak late at night in the home
- Require online age verification through digital ID checks, to ensure alcohol isn't sold to children
- Require ID checks upon delivery and ban unattended delivery, to ensure alcohol isn't supplied to children or intoxicated people
- Prevent alcohol companies from marketing towards people who are at their most vulnerable, to ensure people are not exploited and their health is protected.

1.2...Contact and reunification

This campaign was designed to draw attention to the recommendations arising from the GPV/KCV survey of kinship carers undertaken during COVID-19 lockdown in July /August 2020.

The survey report made nine recommendations aimed at improving the outcomes of the reunification process for families, suggesting that:

- families should be guaranteed an agreed minimum notice of and transition time for reunification.
- DHHS and case managers should provide information for carers about the legal implications of reunification.
- carers embarking on reunification be given access to free legal advice and be assisted to register as a party to the proceedings.
- standards be set for the assessment of the needs of all parties and that development of reunification plans be made mandatory.
- free family counselling be made available to families undergoing reunification.

- free trauma counselling be made available for children undergoing reunification.
- grief counselling be provided free for carers who need support post reunification.
- an automatic compensation payment be developed for carers who have had children under their care reunified with a parent(s).
- case managers conduct systematic site visits to parents, children and carers for a fixed period after the reunification.

1.3...Homestretch

This campaign was designed to encourage all state and territory governments to provide an option, whereby the provision of care can be extended to any young person needing or seeking this, until 21 years, much like what is happening in any other family setting in Australia

In Victoria a Home Stretch program was launched. It enabled young people and their kinship and foster carers to have the option of the young person remaining with their carer up to the age of 21 years, supported by an allowance. Young people leaving residential care will be eligible for an allowance to support them with their housing costs up to 21 years of age.

1.4...Election of Melbourne City Council Mayor

This campaign was designed to support a candidate who had demonstrated commitment to action on local business, family and environment issues

1.5...Raising the age - children charged as adults

This campaign was designed to reduce the age of criminal responsibility across Australia. Currently, children as young as 10 can be arrested by police, charged with an offence, hauled before a court and locked away in a prison. Federal, state and territory governments may send children aged 10 to 13 years to prison.

GPV/GPA supports the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child as it has called on countries to address this matter.

Unfortunately, at a meeting of the Council of Attorneys General in Australia held on July 27th, 2020, a decision was taken not to increase the age of criminal responsibility in Australia.

1.6...Support for Court Network funding

This campaign was designed to commend the valuable work of the Court Network to the Australian government, and to request that funding for the Court Network be continued into the future. As the organisation representing kinship carers across the state, GPV/KCV is well placed to hear detailed stories about the ways in which Court Network volunteers have assisted kinship care families navigating the court system.

1.7...Treating Families Fairly

This campaign was designed to advocate for policies that uphold the rights of children and families by focusing on the intersections between poverty, child and family wellbeing, and government approaches to social problems. This ongoing campaign advocates for social security reform, believing that alleviating poverty and stress are the keys to improving outcomes for children, young people and families.

The Treating Families Fairly Alliance was formed in 2017, and consists of child and family service organisations, peak bodies and academics with expertise in the field of social security and welfare. Current members are:

- Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare
- FamilyCare
- Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand
- Brotherhood of St Laurence
- Council of Single Mothers and their Children
- Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA)
- Kinship Carers Victoria/Grandparents Australia
- Financial Counselling Victoria
- Professor Kay Cook (Swinburne University of Technology)
- Dr Elise Klein (Australian National University)
- Social Ventures Australia
- Cohealth
- Mallee Family Care

1.8 Every Child

This is a national advocacy campaign aimed at promoting the wellbeing of children and young people by calling on governments to:

- Establish a National Child Development Fund and a mechanism, such as a National Council for Children, Young People and Families – that reports on national child wellbeing indicators, facilitates innovation in service delivery to focus on prevention and early support, service and workforce reform, and expansion of the evidence base for action. This Council is to comprise of government and nongovernment, as well as young people from diverse backgrounds.
- Adopt national wellbeing indicators and targets for child health, education, justice and wellbeing.
- Establish an effective mechanism, within the National Council for Children, Young People and Families to support the active participation of young people in advancing their wellbeing.
- Recognise the leadership and strategies advocated by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, to improve the wellbeing of their children and young people, as a priority for action

2... Projects

GPV/KCV conducts 'action projects' to address issues of interest to both grandparents and kinship carers. Many of the projects have been significant in the ways in which they have shaped GPV/KCV's thinking and priorities. The projects can be categorised into three types: investigating topical issues, gathering people together and offering practical assistance.

In the 2020/21 FY eight projects were active.

2.1...Kinship Care Counselling Service

There were 1153 instances of people contacting the referral service across the financial year.

- 345 of these were repeat contacts, meaning the person who made the original contact followed up at least one more time to pursue the original issue or to raise another issue.
- Contacts were made by people from 10 different types of status, including many types of carers and professionals supporting carers. However, the large majority were kinship carers
- Contacts came through email/telephone and face to face meetings (3 face to face consultations prior to covid 19 lockdowns), or virtual meetings and digital methods of communication
- Contacts came from across six geographical areas - metropolitan Melbourne, regional /provincial/rural and isolated areas in Victoria, interstate, and international locations.
- The ratio of solutions to problems raised was high, with 72% of contacts able to report solutions to their problems over a relatively short period of time.
- The 28% of problems not resolved in a relatively short period of time continue to be tracked by KCV. These more stubborn issues were about denied access after reunification, access to costly and unusual financial supports, e.g., a car, and non- delivery of support offered at the start of the placement.

2.2... Kinship Care Week 2020

Due to COVID-19 lockdowns, KCV was unable to host the face-to-face gatherings that characterised the 2019 Kinship Care Week. Instead, extraordinary efforts were made to establish personal contact with as many kinship carers as possible using telecommunications and email connections.

KCW resulted in the distribution of 400 copies of the *Kinship Carers Wellbeing Magazine #4*, 5 copies of *The Two Most Important Days*, and 304 gift vouchers.

The results of a telephone survey on the strategies kinship carers were employing to cope with lockdowns were published as a separate report later in the year.

2.3...Podcasts Series #2

Podcast #14 Coronavirus 19 and kinship carers

In this episode Director of Kinship Carers Victoria (KCV) Anne McLeish talks about the challenges faced by kinship carers during the COVID-19 lockdown and how they and the young people in their care have been coping with the challenges presented by the Coronavirus pandemic.

Podcast #15 Diet for stress

In this episode HEALing Matters Guest Speaker Rachel Green, Monash University, talks about how your diet can help with stress and other physical and mental ailments.

Podcast #16 The importance of kinship care week

guest speaker Minister for Child Protection Luke Donnellan send greetings to kinship carers and thanks carers for the role they play in caring for children and young people.

2.4... Reunification-pathway to family preservation

In 2020, 10 kinship carer families who had experience with reunification of 19 children between them were interviewed to determine the families' views and the implications of their experiences for future procedures surrounding reunification. These conversations were more comprehensive than similar conversations conducted in 2018, and capture more complexities. The research was conducted in collaboration with two senior social work students placed with GPV/KCV by Melbourne University, who spent hours conversing with kinship carers affected by reunification.

The recommendations arising from this project, also outlined in section 1.2 of this report, included:

- Guaranteed minimum notice of and transition time for reunification.
- Provision of information for carers about the legal implications of reunification.
- Provision of free legal advice for carers.
- Mandatory development of standards for needs assessments and reunification plans.

- Free counselling as needed for families, including trauma counselling for children and grief counselling for carers to be available.
- A compensation payment for carers post-reunification.
- Ongoing monitoring and support for families and carers post-reunification.

2.5... Voice of Parents Reference Group

This two year project, which commenced in the 2020/21 FY is hosted by the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare (CFECFW), and will develop a framework for parent voices to be heard through a Charter of Parental Participation, a set of agreed principles that can be applied across organisations and programs in the child and family services sector, and a Parent Participation Model (inclusive of a practical tool kit of resources). These resources will be used by government and the child and family services sector across Victoria for the inclusion of parents' voice in their work.

This project will enable government and the child and family services sector to engage with parents in the development, design, and delivery of services to support them and their children. Organisations represented on the reference group alongside GPV/KCV included:

- QEC
- Berry Street
- Anchor Inc
- Caroline Chisholm Society
- Anglicare Victoria
- Kids First Australia
- Victorian Legal Aid
- VICSEG New Futures
- Key Assets
- Tweddle Child & Family Health Service
- Brotherhood of St Laurence
- Quantum

2.6...Child Healthcare advisory MCRI/CFECFW

The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare (the CFECFW) and the Centre for Community Health (CCCH) at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI) formed a partnership. It will integrate the best knowledge

and practice at the intersection of child health and child and family welfare through research, advocacy and service system development. Through this, the partnership aims to advance the interests of children and young people living with adversity, with a particular focus on those involved with the Statutory Services (Child Protection and Out-of-Home Care).

2.7...Healing Matters Program – Monash University

This program developed by the Monash University department of public health and preventative medicine provides carers with information and practical resources to help young people living in care make positive choices and behaviour changes in relation to their health and wellbeing.

HEALing Matters uses a trauma informed philosophy to guide carers' understanding of the link between healthy lifestyle behaviours of young people and improved physical, cognitive, social and emotional outcomes.

2.8...Empowering children/young people to make complaints

This campaign was designed to develop resources for children and young people explaining their right to speak up when they feel uncomfortable or unsafe and outlining the steps they can take to raise their concerns or make complaints within organisations. GPV/KCV encouraged kinship care families to participate in this survey

3... Publications

GPV/KCV publications are the main vehicle through which the community is informed of both emerging issues of interest to grandparents and kinship carers, and the activities undertaken by GPV/KCV. In addition to this, GPV/KCV has published a number of resources for grandparents and kinship carers to assist them to better fulfil their roles, in the form of information pamphlets and handbooks.

In the 2020/21 financial year the publications distributed have addressed the two main themes evident in previous years: Child/family rights and Child and family wellbeing, and have often focused on Covid-19 related issues.

3.1...The Longitudinal Study of Kinship Care Families

The tenth and final report of the *KCV Longitudinal Study of Kinship Care Families* was completed in October 2020. Commencing in 2011 with 113 participating families, the longitudinal study was comprised of a series of interconnected surveys, including an annual 'check-in' with kinship carers to investigate changes in their lives, as well as more targeted 'snapshot' surveys delving deeper into how specific issues affect the lives of kinship care families.

Over the 10 years of the study, the shape of kinship care families changed as children and young people entered or left kinship care. For example:

- 14 kinship carer families, between them, welcomed an additional 20 children and young people ranging in age from newborn babies to 16-year-olds, into their families.
- 106 children and young people left the placement due to turning 18, being reconciled with parents, or moving into other accommodation.

The study found that although a number of the children and young people in the study still faced ongoing challenges at the conclusion of the study, the majority achieved positive outcomes from their placement with the kinship carers. The majority of young people who had left the study after turning 18 were successfully transitioning or had successfully transitioned into adult life, with only a small percentage reported as being unable to cope with either study or work due to mental or physical difficulties.

3.2...Reunification - a Pathway to Family Preservation

This was a major report of the GPV/KCV project already discussed in sections 1.2 and 2.4 of this Annual Report.

3.3... Kinship Care Counselling Service

This was a major report detailing the findings arising from the counselling service offered to kinship carers. Key issues included:

- **Financial support** – Requests for financial support for kinship carers were high, particularly at the height of the 2020 COVID-19 crisis. Kinship carers reported having insufficient funds to feed the children in their care who were at home due to COVID-19 lockdowns. The one-off payment distributed by the government was helpful but did not sustain many statutory kinship carers.
- **Carer wellbeing** – Requests were received for non-judgmental advice and support. Carers engaged with KCV to express their issues with confidence, knowing they would not have judgement passed on them.
- **Lack of preparation at the beginning of the kinship placement** – Both carers and agencies often sought information and advice from KCV about carer roles and responsibilities because they were not provided with essential information at the onset of the placement. In some cases, placements that were nearly 12 months old had never been properly assessed or supported with information.
- **Communication concerns with DFFH/agencies** – Carers often found it frustrating to communicate with DFFH because telephone calls, even those related to urgent child welfare issues, were not returned.
- **Peer support** – These were requests for connection with other kinship carers and with KCV.
- **Facilitation of parental contact visits** – The costs and responsibilities for supervision of contact visits were a major issue during COVID-19 lockdown times. In many cases, carers were asked to take on supervision of contact visits in contravention of court orders, with no financial compensation and in uncomfortable situations.
- **Access to respite** – This was an ongoing issue that is heightened during times of crisis.
- **Child wellbeing** – Access to counselling for children experiencing incidental trauma attached to changing circumstances such as COVID-19 lockdown was and is non-existent. The traumas have not automatically abated as Covid-19 restrictions have eased.

● **Legal advice** – The provision of inconsistent advice, or no advice, regarding the carers' role in court proceedings was and is a serious issue, and is increasing the level of tension that the lack of proper advice causes.

● **Denial of access** – The number of carers denied access to children after they were reunified with parents grew during the financial year. This growth was caused in part by the increase in reunification of children with parents, which KCV supports. However, the processes of family regeneration surrounding reunification do not exist.

3.4... Covid 19 Newsletter

This was a special purpose newsletter published to provide critical information. Six editions were published with each addressing critical issues related to COVID-19:

- child-parent contact and reunification
- an urgent statement from the Premier
- a call to citizen to act to protect families
- availability of Free Face masks for vulnerable Victorians including kinship carers
- the lockdown restriction and rules
- Access Education and Training for children

3.5...Covid 19 - Resources pamphlets

These pamphlets were published in response to queries submitted by carers who contacted GPV/KCV during Covid-19 times. The issues raised were ones also raised outside of Covid-19 times but there was a greater sense of urgency about the requests for support.

- Camps for children and families in Victoria
- Community legal centres
- Local government contacts

3.6... Kinship carer newsletters

Eleven editions of *The Kinship Carer* and two editions of *KIN News* were published covering topics such as:

- Kinship care and access to school
- Kinship carers week wrap up 2020
- State government announces \$170M free kinder for parents in 2021
- December budget statement from the Victorian government
- Get active Victoria – voucher program for children in care
- Health and Wellbeing of future generations
- How 65 Children and teenagers known to child protection died in one year
- support the Victorian budget 2021
- Kinship Carer respite services

3.6...The Grandparent newsletter

6 editions of the grandparent were published covering topics such as

- Condemnation of the Australian Attorney General for refusing to raise the age of criminal responsibility
- December budget statement from the Victorian government
- Australians in poverty need a recovery program
- Health and wellbeing of future generations
- Single mothers share what the coronavirus supplement has meant to them
- How 65 Children and teenagers known to child protection died in one year

3.7... The Kinship Carer Wellbeing Magazine #4

The fourth edition of this publication was published and distributed to carers during KCW 2020. It included articles on Happiness, Selfcare, quick pick me ups, Looking after yourself, and the health benefits of beetroot, ginger and coffee.

4...Member Support

4.1... Consultation with members

A Coronavirus wellbeing survey for carers was conducted. It revealed a higher overall level of wellbeing than was expected, despite some carers being under serious financial and emotional pressure.

4.2... Kinship care group briefings

3 face-to-face and 3 online support group meetings were attended. The number of visits to kinship care support groups was very much lower than in all previous years due to COVID-19 restrictions.

5... Representation

Representation of the view of members is an important aspect of GPV/KCV work and fits into three broad areas.

5.1... Liaison with peak agencies

GPV/KCV continued throughout this financial year to work with other agencies, including:

- The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare
- Commissioner for Children and Young People
- The Victorian Women's Legal Centre
- The Office of the Public Advocate
- Play Australia
- Foster Carers Association of Victoria
- Permanent Care and Adoptive Families
- Melbourne University
- Brotherhood of St Laurence
- Nillumbik Shire Council
- Families Australia
- Council for Single Mothers and their Children
- Family Care Shepparton
- Mallee Family Care
- Good Shepherd
- Social Ventures
- Australian National University
- Co Health
- Swinburne University
- Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency
- Financial Council Victoria

5.2...Engagement with the Media

This was a relatively quiet year in terms of interaction with the media. Activities included:

- A press release acknowledging the Victorian Government's \$600 COVID-19 payment to kinship carers
- A radio interview during Kinship Carers' Week
- An overnight talk back radio interview on the role of grandparents
- A radio interview about COVID-19 effects on contact/reunification of parents and children

5.3... Participation in policy meetings

Issues addressed across the various committees attended by GPV/KCV included:

- children's rights to biological identity in adoption and surrogacy arrangements
- wellbeing in early childhood
- raising the age of criminal responsibility
- reducing alcohol harm
- support for the court network
- the celebration of Australia Day
- review of the Children, Youth and Families Act
- support programs for carers
- supporting those in out-of-home care up to 21
- aboriginal reconciliation
- preventing alcohol harm
- supporting children's right to play
- grandparents survey (non-carer)

6... Governance

6.1... Governance by the Board

The Board met a record number of times in this financial year. The out of session meetings were undertaken in order to keep the decision-making progressing in case the Board was restricted from meeting face to face due to COVID-19 restrictions. It eventuated that there were the required four face to face meetings. However, the out of session process proved valuable and will be a feature of Board deliberations into the future. The members of the 2020/21 Board were:

- Helen Brown, Chairperson
- Gedda Burke, Deputy chairperson
- Kerry Doquile, grandparent member
- June Smith, grandparent member
- Helen Corcoran, grandparent member

- Angela Hogan, grandparent member
- Jennifer Sullivan, kinship carer member
- Jenny Cheshire, kinship carer member
- Anke Kenter, kinship carer member
- Adine Neill, kinship carer member
- Kerrie Mannix, kinship carer member

6.2...Management of the work

Members of the staff whose task it was to deliver the outcomes defined in the work program were:

- Anne McLeish, Director
- Naomi Whyley, Administration Manager
- Megan Crowle, Project Officer
- Bradley Dawson, Communications Officer
- Alaiba Neuman, Project Officer
- Lisa Mills, Podcast Development

6.3...Meetings

This financial year was characterised by a number of decisions being made online.

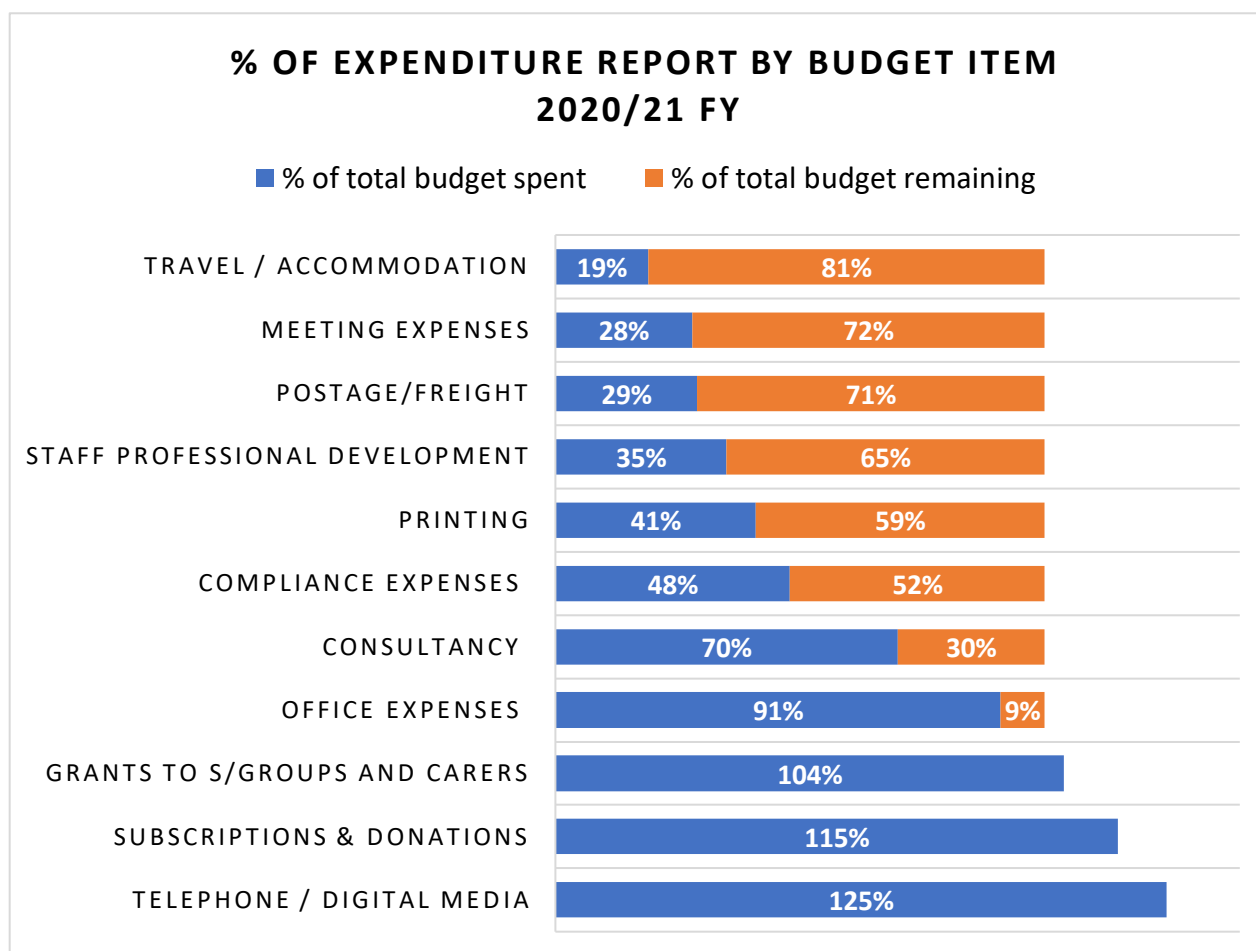
Online meeting	Aug 27 th 2020
Online meeting	Oct 7 th 2020
Face to face meeting #75	Nov 25 th 2020
Online meeting	Jan 19 th 2021
Face to face meeting #76	Feb 10 th 2021
Online meeting	Feb 17 th 2021
Online meeting	Feb 29 th 2021
Online meeting	Feb 31 st 2021
Face to face meeting	April 21 st 2021
Online meeting	May 14 th 2021
Face to face meeting #78	June 23 rd 2021

The Board made decisions related to:

- children's rights to biological identity in adoption and surrogacy arrangements
- wellbeing in early childhood
- raising the age of criminal responsibility
- reducing alcohol harm
- support for the court network
- the celebration of Australia Day
- review of the Children, Youth and Families Act
- support programs for carers
- supporting those in out-of-home care to age 21
- aboriginal reconciliation
- preventing alcohol harm
- supporting children's right to play
- grandparents survey (non-carer)
- GPV 20th anniversary

6.4... Financial Management

The expenditure balances reflect a pattern related to the lockdowns associated with COVID-19. For example, a much-reduced travel budget is indicative of the fact that no travel to face-to-face meetings took place.



Grandparents Victoria Inc. For the year ended 30 June 2021 ABN: 54 173 492 849	
Income	2021
Grant operating	223,377.00
Memberships/ Donations	586.00
Total Income	223,963.00
Expenditure	
Accounting Fees	1,050.00
Assets Purchased < \$5000	2,519.00
Bank Fees	148.00
Computer Expenses	930.00
Consultancy Fees	173,635.00
Donations paid	325.00
Fees & Permits	00.00
Insurance	00.00
Insurance - Rental Properties	312.00
Meeting Expenses	10,479.00
Postage, Freight & Courier	1,052.00
Printing & Stationery	6,491.00
Property Management Fees	14,820.00
Publications & Information Resources	2,491.00
Rates & Taxes	135.00
Repairs & Maintenance	1,826.00
Sundry Expenses	346.00
Travelling Expenses	1,704.00
Utilities	4,213.00
Total Expenditure	222,478.00
Current Year Surplus (profit)	1,485.00
Equity at the beginning of financial year	233,560.00
Equity at the end of financial year	235,045.00

23/11/2022

Grandparents Victoria Inc.
14 Youlden St.
Kensington, Victoria. 3031



Dear Members,

RE: Review of Financial Accounts for Year Ended 30th June 2021.

We, CSS Partners, have reviewed the accounts of Grandparents Victoria Incorporated for the twelve (12) months for the Year Ended 30 June 2021 with the intention of determining the Accuracy of the accounting transactions.

Our, CSS Partners responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We have conducted our audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

We find that they are a true and fair representation of the affairs of the organisation.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul Vassiliadis", with a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul Vassiliadis
CSS Accountants
ABN: 5490016106
Telephone: (03) 9337 3222
Fax :(03) 9337 2911
Email: info@csspartners.com.au
Address: Level 1, 30 Amis Crescent
East Keilor, Victoria. 3033

7...About GPV/KCV

In April 2001, Grandparents Victoria (GPV) was formed with the belief that the life experiences of grandparents mean that they can play a valuable role in supporting their families and the wider community.

At this early stage, with only four core members at the first meeting, it was not certain what the group would do, or how its activities were to be funded, but the idea was welcomed. For the first two years, GPV focused on consultation with grandparents. A number of informal gatherings were held in an attempt to learn what challenges grandparents and their families were facing in the 21st century. A series of more formal forums were also held across the state to get grandparents talking about what they saw as the most pressing issues. Subsequent more regularly held forums have refined these foundation understandings.

In March 2002, the issues faced by grandparents raising their grandchildren were noted, with the GPV Board deciding that the role of grandparents within child protection would be a priority area of work.

Another landmark was reached in 2004 when GPV staff attended the inaugural meeting of the Shepparton Kinship Care Support Group. This was the first of many visits to support groups across the state and heralded a commitment to local peer support for kinship carers. The first statewide kinship care conference was held in the Moonee Valley Town Hall in 2009. The conference brought kinship carers, bureaucrats and community sector representatives together. The kinship carers proved their skill at raising issues and from this occasion the work of advocacy flourished.

In 2010 the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) awarded GPV the contract to establish Kinship Carers Victoria (KCV) as a network formed to connect carers across Victoria, and to act as the peak group representing the views of kinship carers. Thus, GPV/KCV emerged as a statewide agency for addressing a range of issues from the viewpoint of grandparents.

GPV/KCV is committed to an ethical approach to its work, undertaking to:

- maintain a commitment to its beliefs and aims, prioritising the wellbeing of families
- maintain confidentiality at all times, protecting the privacy of all who associate with GPV/KCV
- uphold individual rights and time advocate for the rights of disadvantaged groups
- foster a culture of fairness
- respect a diversity of views.

GPV/KCV believes that:

- **all children must be protected and given every opportunity and support to fulfil their potential**
- **the needs of families are becoming more complex and the support grandparents can offer to their own family and to other families is significant**
- **grandparents and kinship carers have unique understandings and attitudes that should influence decisions about child wellbeing, and that through acting together, they will be strong advocates**
- **grandparents and kinship carers have a responsibility to engage in public discussions and to act to ensure the wellbeing of children.**