

grandparents
V I C T O R I A



 **Kinship**
Carers
V I C T O R I A

ANNUAL REPORT
2022-23



GPV/KCV acknowledges the peoples of the Kulin nation as the traditional owners of our great land and offers respect to Elders, past and present.

GPV/KCV acknowledges that the Aboriginal culture existed in Australia before European settlement and consisted of many community groups. Further, we acknowledge the Indigenous peoples of this land as the oldest continuing cultures in human history.

GPV/KCV acknowledges that laws and policies of the past have inflicted grief and suffering on our fellow Australians and regrets the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families.

GPV/KCV believes that a society that is inclusive of all is crucial to individual and community wellbeing and will behave with respect towards all, irrespective of their race, religion, sexuality, gender or socio-economic background.

GPV/KCV acknowledges 13th of February as National Apology Day, the anniversary of then Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, delivering the National Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples in 2008. GPV/KCV will take steps that promote a happier and healthier future for Indigenous Australians, particularly the children and young people.

Key words which influence GPV/KCV approaches are:

Truthfulness
Confidentiality
Inclusiveness
Integrity
Constancy
Gratitude
Commitment
Compassion

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Kinship Carers Victoria
acknowledges the support of the
Victorian government



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About GPV/KCV

In April 2001, Grandparents Victoria (GPV) was formed as an organisation based on the belief that grandparents can play a valuable role in supporting and advocating for families and the wider community and promoting the value of the public sector.

At this early stage, with only four members at the first meeting, it was not clear what action the group would take, or how its activities were to be funded, but enthusiasm was high.

For the first two years, GPV focused on consultation with grandparents to learn what challenges they and their families were facing. A series of forums were also held across Victoria to collect different many opinions. Since then, regular forums and surveys have been conducted to verify these early views.

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 organisation's first local grandparents support group. This was the first of many visits to support groups across the state. In 2010 the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) awarded GPV the contract to establish Kinship Carers Victoria (KCV) as the peak group representing the views of kinship carers.

GPV/KCV addresses a wide range of issues. Some issues, aside from support for kinship carers, appear on its work program year in and year out, with family poverty being the most urgent of all the issues addressed over the years.

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 advocate for the rights of disadvantaged groups
- foster a culture of fairness

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 families in general is significant
- grandparents and kinship carers have unique understandings and attitudes that should influence decisions about child wellbeing
- grandparents and kinship carers have a responsibility to engage in public discussions and to act to ensure the wellbeing of children

Privacy Guarantee

GPV/KCV securely stores and manages personal information shared through all forms of communications with the organisation. No personal information is ever shared with any other agency, including DFFH or any other government agency. When survey reports are completed the personal data of participants is destroyed.

Life members

Helen and Mal Brown

Anne McLeish

Jack Lloyd

Trevor and Christine Wilson

Francis and Susan Morgan

Allan and Noelle Mawdsley

A year of transition from COVID-19

The 2022–23 financial year saw the most dire and immediate effects of the COVID-19 pandemic wane. However, there are some consequences of COVID-19 that will remain evident for some time to come. Amongst the lingering effects is the financial pressure brought to bear on families, especially kinship care families. The costs of COVID-19 were many and varied and, combined with rises in the cost of living that saw the basic costs of existence such as the cost of food increase, have been debilitating for many families.

Whilst GPV/KCV was not in a position to provide financial support to families, efforts made to highlight the financial plight of families were redoubled through a number of committees upon which GPV/KCV sits and through letter writing to Victorian and Australian politicians as well as to others in a position to make policy decisions that could alleviate family poverty.

Family poverty is an issue of national significance that the community as a whole will need to be tackled over a long time.

Another lingering effect of COVID-19 is the breakdown of social networks that bring people together face to face. The only safe connections to make for some time during COVID-19 restrictions were via phone or email. This change in habit has persisted to some extent. One item of evidence for this is the slow progress of kinship carers back to the local face-to-face support groups they enjoyed pre-COVID-19. These gatherings were enjoyed by kinship carers and need to be restored.

The COVID-19 adversity shone a light on kinship carers in an unexpected way. The difficulties they faced were expected to be insurmountable – they were not. The difficulties themselves were extremely challenging but they were reduced in scale by the kinship carers themselves who bore the burdens with grace and fortitude. During the course of the past two years GPV/KCV staff have sometimes been consoled by the kinship carers who were suffering worse hardships than the staff ever expected to encounter. At other times the kinship carers resigned themselves to their burdens with sage observations such as “We are all in this together. Some people are suffering more than us. At least the kids and I are well.”

The stoicism of kinship carers was an inspiration throughout COVID-19 and has strengthened GPV/KCV’s resolve to keep working on their behalf.

Governance and management

Board members

There were 11 Board members for 2022–23, with some founding members remaining active. Founding and shorter-term members have the same rights and responsibilities, with the authority of all members being equal.

Chairperson

Helen Brown, member for 22 years

General grandparent positions

- Kerry Doquile, member for 22 years
- Angela Hogan, member for 22 years
- Helen Corcoran, member for 14 years
- Sandie Harbison, member for two years
- Carole Cheng, member for two years

Kinship care positions

- Jennifer Sullivan, kinship carer member for seven years
- Jenny Cheshire, kinship carer member for seven years
- Anke Kenter, kinship carer member for five years
- Adine Neill, kinship carer member for six years
- Kerrie Mannix, kinship carer member for four years

Between them Board members have raised 39 children and 72 grandchildren as well as one great-grandchild. Of the 72 grandchildren, over time 24 have been raised in full-time kinship care arrangements by Board members

Board Attendance and decision making

Overall, the attendance at Board meetings was higher than in the previous financial year. Two Board members attended every meeting. Five members apologised for one meeting each, two missed three meetings and two attended less than a majority. The two Board members who attended less than a majority of meetings were ill and tendered apologies. These two Board members attended to Board business other than the face-to-face Board meetings. Four face-to-face Board meetings were held. A quorum was in place at the starting time of all meetings and all scheduled business was attended to, with decisions made in relation to the substantive issues outlined in the issues section of this report.

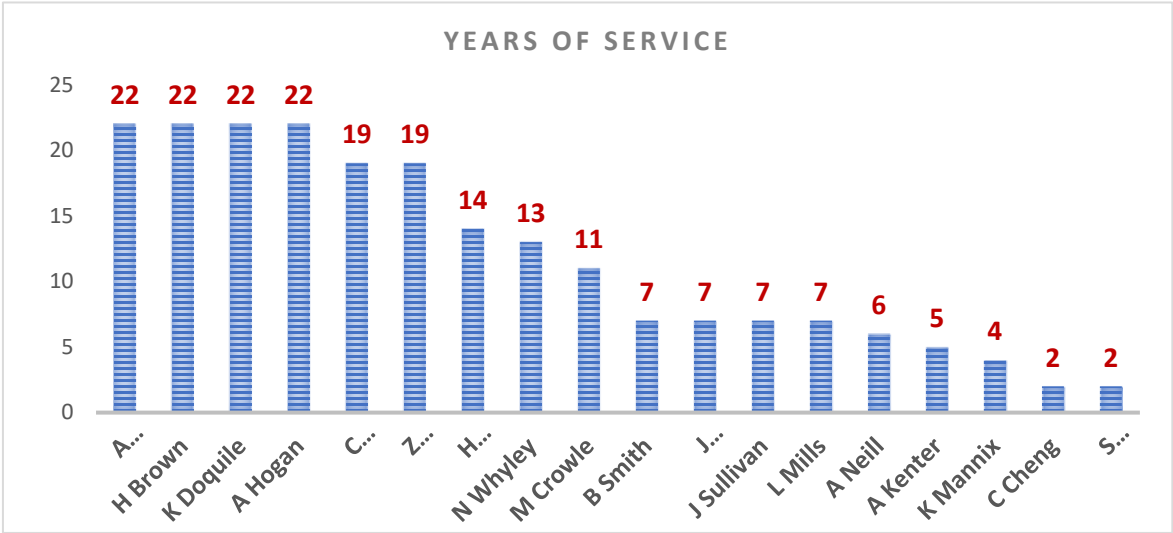
Staff members

Members of the paid and unpaid staff who delivered the outcomes defined in the 2022–23 work program across a total of 4,160 hours worked across 308 days of operation were:

- Anne McLeish, Director, 22 years
- Naomi Whyley, Administration Manager, 13 years
- Megan Crowle, Project Assistant for 11 years
- Bradley Dawson, Communications Officer for seven years
- Lisa Mills, Podcast Development, for seven years
- Zoe McLeish, Project Assistant, for 19 years – mostly as a volunteer
- Catherine McLeish, BAS lodgement, for 19 years – mostly as a volunteer

Shared expertise

Despite some changes to membership, the Board and staff provide stable service to GPV/KCV. Their years of service are illustrated in the graph below.



Issues addressed

Issues raised by the Board

The issues raised by the Board covered a sweep of family and community-related issues. Given that kinship care families are a subset of all families, it can be claimed that the interests of kinship families are represented in all matters raised. However, there were many occasions where matters related specifically to kinship care took precedence in discussions and occupied prime position in the work program.

Reconciliation matters

1. Self-determination for the Aboriginal community
2. Supporting yes for the Voice to Parliament for Aboriginal Australians
3. The GPV/KCV Aboriginal reconciliation plan regular review and recommitment

Celebrations

7. GPV/KCV Social Services Week forum with Swinburne University
8. Kinship Care Week 2022 with limited face-to-face celebrations due to COVID-19
9. Delegates sent to the national carers' conference 2022 in Darwin

Legal matters

18. Review of Victorian Rights Charter for carers
19. Participation in the drafting of a new charter for children with disabilities
20. Examining the legal recognition of carers in Australian law
21. Examining the need for a Human Rights Act for Australia

Family wellbeing matters

4. Mental Health issues with an emphasis on the needs of children and youth
5. Improved outdoor play and recreation experiences for children with disabilities
6. Identifying the areas of national priority that contribute to a strong Australian community (response to a Federal Government position paper)

Kinship care matters

10. Analysis of the 2021 Census data
11. Analysis of Senate Report into children with a parent in prison and testimonial to the enquiry panel
12. Co-sponsoring forums about the rights of parents with an intellectual disability dealing with child protection
13. Budget cuts to, and likely abolition of, the Parent Line
14. The connection between permanent, foster and kinship/kith carers and their respective roles with family care
15. Learning and development activities for kinship carers, foster carers and permanent carers
16. Supporting families to stay together through use of kinship carers as support agents before removing children if necessary to do so
17. The inappropriateness of adoption within the context of out-of-home care

Campaigns

22. Abolition of corporal punishment of children
23. Increasing the age of criminal responsibility
24. Testimony to the Victorian Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Social Issues about support for kinship care
25. Support for kinship carers and for the public sector
26. Supporting the YES campaign for calling for a Voice to Parliament for Aboriginal Australians
27. Support for agencies assisting refugees – donation to resource centre and participation on walk in support of refugees

Issues raised by kinship carers

There are a number of mechanisms for kinship carers to raise issues. However, the issues raised through the KCV counselling processes reflect the balance of issues raised across the board. The wellbeing of carers during the COVID-19 pandemic remained a focus of the service. However, once the incidence of conversations about that was removed there was little difference in the issues raised when compared with other years. Financial and other support for carers remains a concern. The chart below outlines the issues raised and the percentage of times each matter was raised when measured against the total number of calls.

25%	1	Post-COVID-19 wellbeing checks of kinship care families
17%	2	Access to non-financial supports – education, housing, support groups, respite
15%	3	Access to financial support, including interstate entitlements
9%	4	Participation in decision making – access to information, DFFH decisions, quality of care procedures, legal advice
8%	5	Support for informal carers
5%	6	Family preservation – access visits, denial of access, family finding, reunification, support for parents
5%	7	Preparation for caring – access to information and training, assessments, birth certificates, cultural training, family group conferencing, parenting programs
4%	8	Uluru Statement/Voice to Parliament
3%	9	Carer learning and development
3%	10	Evaluation of KCV counselling service
2%	11	Carer mental and physical health
2%	12	General grandparents’ rights, including for those no longer in the role of kinship carers caring for children
1%	13	Child mental and physical health
1%	14	DFFH /agency complaints about system support

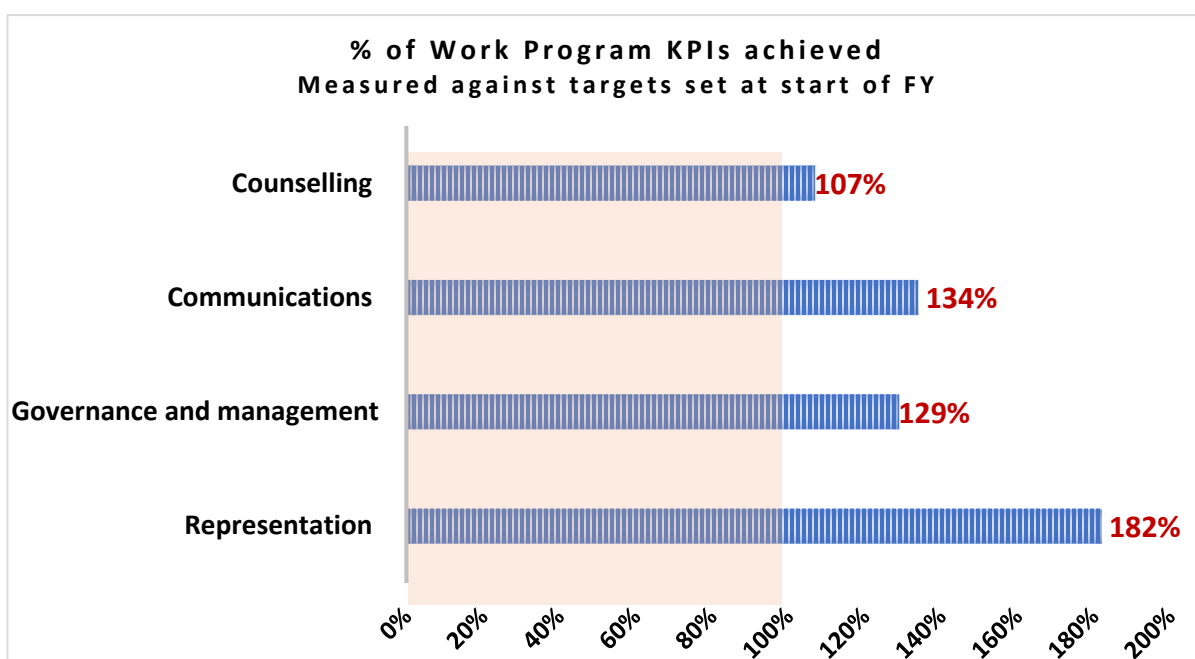
Some notes about the issues raised by kinship carers.

- Kinship carers raised practical matters related to their everyday survival. The three most often mentioned issues, as identified above, are always the most commonly spoken about by kinship carers. In this financial year these three issues constituted 57% of the total issues raised.
- The frustration kinship carers experience in relation to poor decision making by DFFH and agencies they deal with is consistent with other years.
- Some of the carers who called about the Voice to Parliament campaign were sceptical about this issue.
- It is expected that carer learning and development will become a more prominent issue in the next few financial years and relates to carers not being told “what is going on”.

Overall achievement of the work program

The work program is divided into four broad streams of work, each with its own projects and key performance indicators which need to be achieved. In 2022–23 the streams of work and their related projects were as outlined below.

Counselling (refer to page 9)	Six key performance indicators
Communications	This area of work is growing as more funds are able to be allocated to it, allowing employment of the communications officer for increased hours. The communications work includes messaging carers and grandparents, production of publications, website updates, managing events, evaluation of the KCV counselling service. 11 key performance indicators
Governance and management (refer to pages 6 & 7)	GPV/KCV has a rigorous approach to governance matters, with Board members and staff both subject to review of their contributions. There were no particular governance highlights this financial year. However, the level of Board participation in meetings and events was high. 7 key performance indicators
Representation and advocacy	This area of work is always one of the most substantive, and consumes considerable time and funds in its execution. Meetings attended to represent the views of kinship carers in particular, are numerous and challenging, given the complexity of the issues the meetings address. 7 key performance indicators



The KCV Kinship Care Counselling Service

Growth of the service

There were 596 personal interactions with carers, with the vast majority being telephone conversations with carers. This represented an increase of 168 from the previous financial year

COVID-19 still an issue

This year of the service exhibited new characteristics that KCV believes will be ongoing. Many of the calls in and out during the COVID-19 years were about carer wellbeing – with carers needing to connect to alleviate their isolation. This need was in part created by the closure of local face-to-face support group meetings but also happened because of the KCV policy of uninterrupted sympathetic listening.

The issues raised through the service varied little from the previous two financial years, with COVID-19 focussed contacts predominating. However, by the end of the financial year this was already changing, with declining numbers of COVID-19-related conversations happening. The full list of issues raised in the counselling service is outlined later in this annual report.

Good news conversations

Some carers, although by no means enough, informed KCV when their problems were being solved. KCV notes that few carers have called KCV to acknowledge two recent improvements in support for kinship carers. Firstly, KCV knows from speaking to agencies that scores of kinship carers have had their care allowance reviewed and allowance levels increased. There are instances of significant improvements of child wellbeing as a result. Secondly, the \$650 payment arising from the state budget in 2023 has rarely been mentioned.

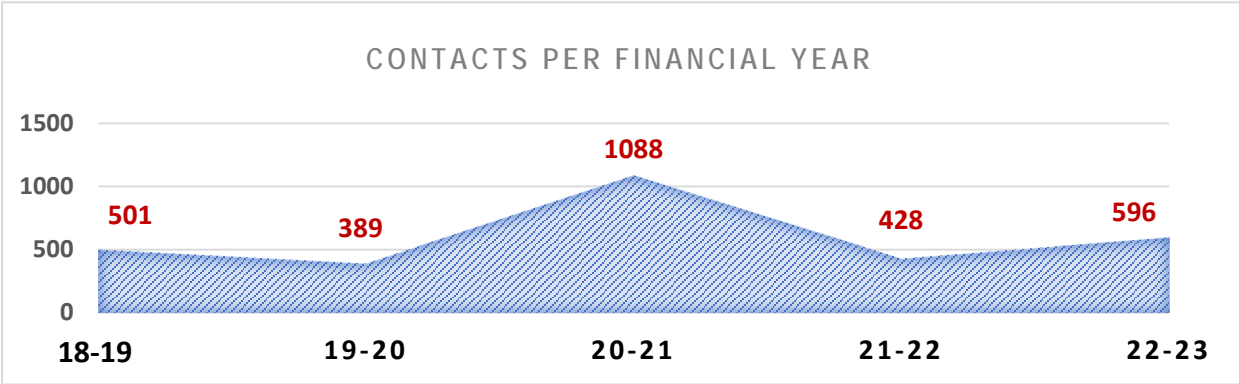
In 2023–24 KCV will attempt to determine some of the positive news in relation to support for kinship carers.

Evaluation of the service

The evaluation of the service by 20 randomly selected carers was positive. However, KCV will implement measures to further strengthen the service. For example, this will include the implementation of a more systematic approach to evaluation with a minimum number of carer evaluations to be completed within a month of the carer’s initial call. This will help reduce the confusion about which agency carers are talking to that some carers experience. The evaluation will also include more questions about how the problems carers original call about are being solved.

Early referral to KCV

The early referral of carers to KCV through the Carers Help Line and the Engagement Teams was sporadic. KCV has a unique relationship with carers that is clearly valued by them and which compliments all other services.



Publications

The GPV/KCV publications program is growing and increasingly relies on the electronic distribution of information. However, given the number of kinship carers who do not regularly use electronic media, surface mailout of key information continues to be undertaken.

Welcome packages (25)

This is information sent to kinship carers who have connected with KCV for the first time. These packages include a voucher and printed information about services in the DFFH and across the wider community.

Newsletters (18)

The Kinship Carer newsletter and The Grandparent newsletters feature current information on issues related to the needs and interests of the kinship carers and grandparents.

Websites (3)

The websites were updated at least fortnightly and proved to be growing in popularity given the increase in visits to each of the three sites managed by GPV/KCV (each site attracted about 10% more attention than the previous year):

- GPA – 19,426 visits
- GPV – 24,149 visits
- KCV – 68,667 visits
- Podcasts – 1,122 listens

Community resources (11)

These were booklets directing kinship carers to sources of additional support or advice beyond that provided by DFFH. They included information on the following themes:

1. Mental Health & Family Relationships
2. Camps & Respite
3. Services Australia - Carer Support
4. Education
5. The Legal Community
6. Carers' Wellbeing
7. LGA Contacts
8. Assistance for Those Coping with Suicide
9. LGBTQIA+ Families & Communities
10. Children with Disabilities
11. Grandparent Rights

Podcasts (6)

Podcasts are on topics decided upon with reference to the issues being raised by kinship carers and feature carers speaking about their views on the matter being examined as well as expert opinions. However the topics are also of interest to listeners other than kinship carers. Topics covered in podcasts in 2022–23 included:

1. Connecting With Others
2. Diet And Stress
3. Relaxation Techniques for Carers
4. The Benefits of Exercise
5. Sleep
6. Hobbies

GPV/KCV reports (5)

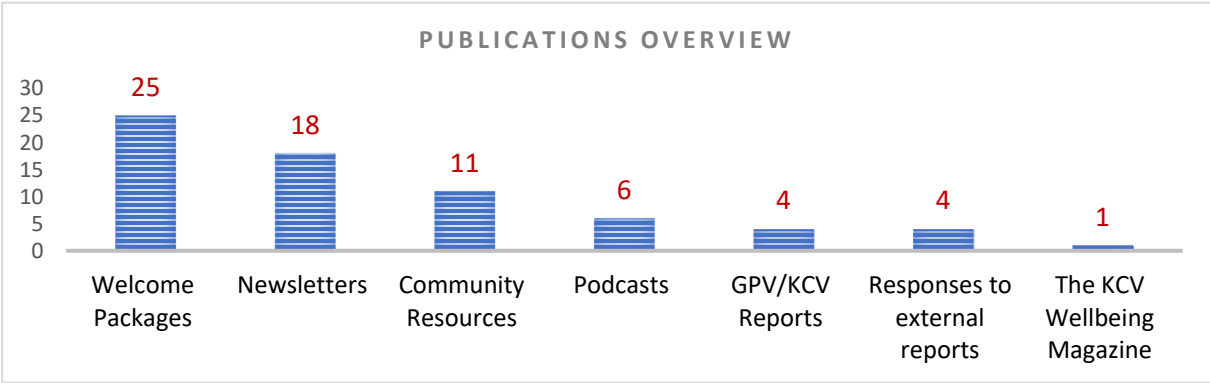
GPV/KCV publishes annual reports and other reports or similar documents in a timely manner and in some detail, allowing for transparency of the organisation's achievements and approaches taken. Reports published in 2022–23 included the following:

- The Role of Grandparents Survey Report
- Disability Survey Report
- GPV/KCV History Book
- GPV/KCV Annual Report 2021–22
- KCV Counselling Service Annual Report 2021–22

Responses to external reports (4)

1. A response to the Victorian Auditor General's Office report on DFFH support for kinship
2. Yoorrook Justice Commission – the Board paid close attention to the information arising during the course of these hearings
3. Royal Childrens Hospital survey on childrens play, particularly outdoor play
4. Response to the Australian Government discussion paper 'Measuring What Matters' on the issues that contribute to the wellbeing of the nation and all its citizens

The KCV Wellbeing Magazine (1) This magazine is featured in Kinship Care Week celebrations.



Media

ABC podcast host Maggie Dent parental as anything – Grandparents: are we expecting too much? This podcast featured Anne McLeish, director of Grandparents Australia, ABC’s Richard Glover and Larrakia elder Richard Fejo. The podcast covers the topic of how do we celebrate the joy of grandparenting– but also offers tips on how to foster relationships from afar, what to do if tensions arise over child rearing ideas and what to say if a grandparent is not in a child’s life at all. And do we rely on grandparents too much for free child care?

The Guardian newspaper – The challenges facing kinship carers, (carer payments), what needs to change and any hopes for the upcoming state budget.

ABC newspaper Re kinship care

ABC radio – discussion on kinship care

Campaigns

Three campaigns were pursued and included actions such as writing letters, attending meetings.

Uluru Statement from the Heart – The GPV/KCV Board made a decision to support the ‘Yes’ campaign on the Voice to parliament referendum. Letters were sent to all Victorian and Australian politicians urging them to take action in their own electorates to support the ‘Yes’ vote. Further to this, over 100 GPV/KCV members and friends agreed to take action with their own families and communities.

Corporal Punishment of Children – GPV/KCV joined a campaign to persuade Australian governments to outlaw corporal punishment of children and young people

Kinship care support and support for the public sector – The May 2023 Victorian State budget disappointed once again: there were no ongoing increases to carer payments. Statutory carers were awarded a \$650 “one-off” bonus. However, such payments are not as helpful as an ongoing increase in payments. Also concerning are the ongoing cuts to the public service, with a further 4,000 jobs cut from across the whole public service.

Prior to the budget, KCV issued a statement forewarning of the unsatisfactory consequences of not supporting carers sufficiently well and on the cost to wider community wellbeing of cuts to the public service.

After the budget KCV wrote to all Victorian politicians in protest at the lack of due consideration of kinship carers and calling on the government to make connections with kinship carers in their electorates and to listen to their stories of financial hardship. As MPs respond KCV is making appointments to brief them. A letter to MPs in the Australian Government was also sent. It urged national action to strengthen the public sector across the nation.

The Australian Carers Recognition Bill – KCV is seeking the inclusion of kinship carers in the Australian Carers Recognition Bill. This will give the recognition necessary to urge better support for them across the country.

Special Events

GPV/KCV hosted some events in 2022–23.

GPV/KCV Luncheon

The highlight event of the 2022-23 financial year was a luncheon, long delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions, to celebrate the 20th anniversary of GPV. Sixty-three attendees from the community and DFFH joined grandparents and carers to celebrate the power of community action and the community sector in general.

The GPV history book *Shaping the Future for Families* was launched on this occasion. The book outlines the range of issues addressed and actions taken by GPV/KCV between 2001 and 2021.

Kinship Care Week 2022 was a scaled-back event, with the effects of COVID-19 still evident in carers' reluctance to venture far from home. One local group held a zoom meeting and two held luncheons. Further to this other events during the week included the following:

- A record number of thank-you packages were posted to carers cross the state. The packages included the *Kinship Carer Wellbeing Magazine*.
- A podcast on loneliness and connection was released.
- KCV and Swinburn University co-hosted a forum on social justice that featured kinship care
- Kinship care community resource booklets were released

STAR/GPV Experts forum 1

Parents with a disability and child protection

This was intended as a series opener, with subsequent sessions dedicated to specific topics relevant to tackling the challenges parents with a disability face.

This forum brought together the sector in the fields of disability advocacy and support, child protection, lived experience, and the law to discuss and review a draft Charter of Rights for Parents and Carers with Disabilities Involved in Child Protection in Victoria.

Surveys

Play for children with a disability

This survey was undertaken as part of a project conducted by Play Australia. Kinship carers raising children with disabilities were surveyed to determine the value of the experience for the children in their care.

There was little reporting of outside play except for what takes place at school. Play when visiting friends was usually indoors. The only outdoors activity was “hanging around” at the shops and the like, with some carers reporting that play grounds are unsafe for children because their disability precludes them being able to make decisions about their own safety, and there was a fear that the children may even just bolt out onto the roads because there are no fences around the playgrounds. Furthermore, the survey found that kinship carers believed some playground surfaces that are currently hard should be replaced with matting that can support children who fall.

Other findings pointed to the isolation of children with a disability.

- Many carers commented on the barriers for children who have to deal with multiple disabilities. Even if each disability is mild or minor the fact that there are multiple problems makes the child's case of isolation critical and drastically reduces their play and recreation options.
- Intellectual disabilities, particularly if communication is difficult, are hard for other playmates to respond to and are frustrating for the child with the disability – leading to more serious lack of play than is available to children with only physical disabilities.
- Unless the carers live close to sympathetic sporting clubs it is hard for carers to get the children to any community sporting activities. Help with transport is critical yet rarely available.

- In many cases, aside from the few children with disabilities who have friendship connections at school, the children make friends with adults who visit the home or with the children of these adults.
- “Hanging out” together is viewed as a valuable play experience/social activity. Even if the children are engaged in sport it is believed that just spending time with other children provides critical social contact.

Representation and advocacy

The role of representing the aspirations and needs of kinship carers is important and challenging. Discussions with carers through the KCV counselling service and at meetings of kinship carers provide the foundation information upon which discussions in the policy arena are based.

The number of agencies KCV met with across a total of 200 engagements was as follows:

- International agencies – one engagement
- National agencies – 17 engagements
- Victorian child protection sector – 53 agencies and community groups
- Victorian community groups – 17

The four priority issues discussed at meetings with other agencies were

- reconciliation
- support for kinship carers
- family poverty
- disability and mental health

GPV/KCV chairing roles in 2022–23

- Carer KaFE Kinship Care Induction Program
- Kinship Services Network
- KCV Facilitators Forum
- Parents with a Disability Forum
- Carer KaFE Executive Committee
- Carer KaFE Governance Group

Finance Report

Finance Report

Grandparents Victoria Inc. Auditor's Report 17/10/2023 for the year ended 30 June 2023

Income

	2023	2022
Grants	326,381	227,484
Grants - Other	23,100	17,160
Total Grant Operating	349,481	244,644
Donations		
Donations Received	-	870
Total Donations	-	870
Membership Fees	425	320
Total Income	349,906	245,834
Gross Surplus	349,906	245,834
Other Income		
Other Revenue	3,000	-
Total Other Income	3,000	-
Expenditure		
Accounting Fees	942	645
Advertising & Marketing	-	1,560
Assets Purchased < \$5000	-	1,249
Bank Fees	119	66
Board and Governance Expenses	1,376	787
Client Support Services	6,136	7,300
Computer Expenses	4,115	2,293
Consultancy Fees	185,400	179,158
Donations paid	1,030	300
Fees & Permits	185	48
Hire of Plant & Equipment	1,464	-
Insurance - Rental Properties	-	305
Meeting Expenses	7,664	5,018
Membership Fees Paid	188	124
Postage, Freight & Courier	3,116	1,918
Printing & Stationery	12,080	6,744
Property Management Fees	22,875	21,750
Publications & Information Resources	-	1,752
Rates & Taxes	-	249
Repairs & Maintenance	1,264	929
Training & Development	-	1,181
Travelling Expenses	3,798	999
Utilities	5,258	3,914
Total Expenditure	257,011	238,288
	2023	2022
Current Year Surplus/ (Deficit) Before Income Tax Adjustments	95,895	7,545
Current Year Surplus/(Deficit) Before Income Tax	95,895	7,545
Net Current Year Surplus After Income Tax	95,895	7,545

Auditor's Report

Grandparents Victoria Inc. For the year ended 30 June 2023



Independent Auditors Report to the members of the Association

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Grandparents Victoria Inc. (the association), which comprises the committee's report, the assets and liabilities statement as at 30 June 2023, the income and expenditure statement for the year then ended, cash flow statement, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the certification by members of the committee on the annual statements giving a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of the association.

Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The committee of Grandparents Victoria Inc. is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report, and has determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 is appropriate to meet the requirements of the Corporations Act 2001/ACNC Act and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The committee's responsibility also includes such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We have conducted our audit in accordance with 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.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the association's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report, in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the committee, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects (or gives a true and fair view –refer to the applicable state/territory Act), the financial position of Grandparents Victoria Inc. as at 30 June 2023 and (of) its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, and the requirements of the Corporations Act 2001/ACNC Act.

Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial statements, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist Grandparents Victoria Inc. to meet the requirements of the Corporations Act 2001/ACNC Act . As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

Auditor's signature: Paul Vassiliadis

Auditor's address: Level 1, 30 Amis Crescent, Keilor East VIC. 3033