

Hunter Region GAPS Groups

Cessnock

**1st and 3rd Tuesday of every month:
10am-12pm**

The Cottage in Dudley St, Cessnock (on the Anglican Church grounds)

Charlestown

Wednesday: 10am-12pm

St Alban's, St Albans Close,
Charlestown

East Maitland

Tuesday: 10am-12pm

Community Hall,
32 Bruce Street, East Maitland

Mayfield

Monday: 11am-12.30pm (fortnightly)

Anglican Church Hall,
Church St, Mayfield

Morriset

Friday: 10am-12pm

Southlake Anglican Church,
Cnr Bridge & Newcastle Sts Morisset

Nelson Bay

Wednesday: 10am-12pm

Gan Gan Family Centre,
Old Main Rd, Anna Bay

Raymond Terrace

Friday: 10:30am-12pm

St Johns Anglican Church Hall,
Sturgeon St, Raymond Terrace

Singleton

Thursday: 12.30pm-2.30pm

Anglican Church,
Cnr Goulburn and High Street, Singleton

Toronto/Fennell Bay

TBA

Gloucester

Friday: 10am-12pm

St. Pauls Anglican Church, Gloucester

Please Contact:

● Heather Robinson, Samaritans
● Kinship Care

● For referrals or information on any of
● the above

● Mob: 0429 914 553 or email:

● hrobinson@samaritans.org.au

● www.samaritans.org.au/kinshipcare

Some Helpful Contacts

COTA (Council of the Ageing)

Ph: 02 9286 3860

www.raisinggrandchildren.com.au

Legal Aid - Hunter Community Legal Centre

Ph: 4040 9123

www.hunterclc.org.au

Family Assistance Office

Dedicated Grandparent Worker Ph:1800

245 965

or Ph: 136150

www.familyassist.gov.au

So you've just become the primary carer for your grandchild

A guide for beginners to help you
in your journey.



Supported by:


Samaritans
Compassion Integrity Justice

Becoming a full time carer to your grandchildren can be very unexpected and overwhelming, and you may feel you have no idea where to start. This brochure was created to help, support and to direct you to the appropriate services.

Steps for beginners

Step 1. Tell your story:

To a specialist kinship care case-worker if possible and/or to a Grandparents as Parents support (GAPS) group.

Step 2. Keep a diary:

- i) Start your diary with the details on how you came to be the primary carer of your grandchild/children
- ii) Maintain the diary by jotting down:
 - a) Day-to-day incidents about your grandchild and yourself. Think about how you're coping or otherwise with this new situation including financially and legally as well as your health and well-being
 - b) Any incidents involving interaction between you, your grandchild and the grandchild's parents.

Step 3. Contact your local GAPS group:

See list on back page or, if there is none locally, contact one that you may be able to travel to occasionally. Failing that, contact Council Of The Aged on 02 9286 3860. These groups have been found to be of significant worth in helping grandparents cope with their new living situation.

Visit Samaritans website at www.samaritans.org.au for information on services that can assist you.

Step 4. Ask your GAPS group to help you to:

- i) Contact you nearest 'emergency relief' service for clothes, bedding furniture, etc.
- ii) Work out what financial support you are eligible for and how to access this support.
- iii) Contact legal support where necessary.

Step 5. Meet with the Principal at your child's school:

To explain the new situation and seek their support in helping your grandchild cope with the trauma of this major change in their living arrangements.

Step 6. Make sure:

Both you, your partner, and your grandchild have some social opportunities each week. Individual GAPS groups organise activities such as picnics, outings and camps throughout the year. These help the grandchildren to 'discover' others in a like situation to themselves and gives you some degree of respite!

Step 7. Seek Professional counselling:

As soon as you feel you are not understanding or coping with your grandchild's behaviour or health and well-being. Or, if the situation is putting a stress on your other relationships. Again, GAPS will help you with seeking such support.

