



Grandparents & Other Relatives - Parenting

Often grandparents are called on to assume responsibility for full-time care of their grandchildren due to family complications such as divorce, substance abuse, imprisonment, and child abuse. The Family Law Amendment Act 2000 makes specific provision for grandparents to make applications where previously their power to bring applications came under the head of 'any other person'. This legislative change recognises the increasing number of applications for parenting orders made by grandparents.

Getting support

Adapting to a change in circumstances can be challenging for both grandparents and grandchildren. Many who take on this role will need information on services and support available, including information on respite, financial assistance, medical care and legal matters. There is a range of services and groups that can support you and your grandchildren with your emotional and practical needs such as:

- Grandparent support groups
- Child care centres
- In-school tutoring
- Parentline (Ph 1300 30 1300)

There are support groups for grandparents who are caring for, or who have been denied contact with their grandchildren. For a list of groups in Queensland telephone Seniors Enquiry Line on 1300 135 500.

Your library, community centre or the internet is a good source of free information about how to cope with the demands of parenting today.

If you are currently caring for your grandchildren and feel their future care arrangements should be formally arranged, it is suggested you see a solicitor to discuss what steps you need to take.

Points to consider

- Will your health allow you to cope with the rigours and demands of caring for a grandchild?
- Should you report your concerns to a child welfare agency rather than take on the issues yourself?
- Exposing children to ridicule of their parents may add to the child's distress.
- Seeking counselling or professional assistance for grandchildren may be beneficial for them and can strengthen cases in court actions.
- Balance your concerns for your grandchild with the pros and cons of legal proceedings or mediation.
- Child protection concerns are a separate issue where urgent action can be taken by the police or the Department of Child Safety.

Family Law Solicitors Joseph Parker and Bruce Scott are qualified to give you professional advice on your position regarding parenting. If you have any further questions contact us on **(07) 3283 3377** for fast, accurate and timely legal advice.

This guide contains information on current legal issues applicable at the time of printing. Please note that there may have been changes subsequently which have not been incorporated in to the material. This guide is intended for information purposes only and its content should not be applied to any particular set of facts or relied upon without first seeking legal or other professional advice. For further information on how we can help you, please contact:

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