

From:
To: [Community Affairs Committee \(SEN\)](#)
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I am a sole parent grandcarer of 3 children aged 12,14,16. They have been in my care for 12 years.

When they were younger the sole parent pension and FTB were enough to get by on, free daycare and after school care a bonus, and at Christmas other institutions offered presents to fill the stocking. They were excited about a bunch of 'new' cloths from the Salvos and 2 or 3 pairs of shoes a year from Kmart. They ate whatever I put on the table, so foodbank was my hero.

Then they discovered designer labels and electronics.

Three phone credits a month \$90

Internet access for facebook and playing PS3 on line \$130pm

Shoes \$100 a pair give or take, still 3 pairs a year, plus a pair to go to the concert in and sandals to hang out at late night shopping in and

Pocket money and

Nana can you take me here, and then take the other one somewhere else and pick up the third from the station. No one only trip family outings anymore.

I have been spending my superannuation for the last 5-6 years to the tune of \$5000 a year plus to fill the gaps.

We have been fortunate enough to have a couple of weekends away in 12 years, mostly organised through Wanslea's grandcare support group, and the kids have been on camps through Edmund Rice and Arafmi, but no real holiday, so this last year we went to the eastern states to see their great grandmother and other family members. (cost \$3500)

And it doesn't end with the day to day expenses. My fridge has a bladder problem due to old age, it's 20, the springs in the lounge surprise you if you don't quite know where to sit, it's 15 years old and my 14 year old people mover had major engine failure 2 days before Christmas. Thank God my daughter in law could lend me her car until the van is fixed and that I still have a few bob left in the superfund. After all, by the time I can retire I will definately be too old to go far, so I suppose I might as well spend it now anyway.

I am grateful that I was not forced to go to work when my youngest turned 8, and I was 62. I have had a couple of part time/temporary jobs over the years, but find I am too tired to do it for long. My kids have ADHD/ODD so there are a lot of other stresses as well.

Just a couple more little tit bits....

Short of winning lotto or living to 110, I will not be able to pay off my own home.

I am entitled to child support from the kids parents, its \$30 a month from mum, and the same from dad once he has paid his Centrelink debt off.

I have encouraged these kids to get part time work to save for their own car etc., and wants that are not needs. Two of them are old enough and are doing just that.

I have 6 other grandkids, I don't get a lot of time to spend with them.

Who are these kids going to look to to be the grandmother of their children for baby

sitting duties?

I do get help from HACC for house cleaning, an hour a week and gardening every 6-8 weeks, it all helps but for me the issues are financial and respite.

And after suffering thus all these years, I understand that if the kids want a passport, they will have to get their parents to sign for it. What a slap in the face for me.