

## THE SILENT SUFFERING OF GRANDPARENTS

The silent sacrifice of Grand Parents (and Great Grand Parents) rearing children is borne by thousands of Australians.

Many accept with unconditional love the responsibility for the care of children for whom they have the duty of primary care.

The heavy price many pay is loss of health, either through their own health issues, emotional distress from the fractured family circumstances demanding their care involvement, or advancing age.

Also, the stress of the attendant financial burden is worsened by no funding assistance from the Federal Government which does assist foster parents.

Grand parents in this role should at least be on the same level of assistance as foster parents.

A recent Government handout of \$400 annually to grandparents is a pittance. A foster parent payment of \$400 a fortnight would be fairer.

The plight of these people is no longer “the elephant in the room” ... it is a multitudinous herd of elephants rampaging in streets throughout the country.

The Federal Government has responded to this human crisis by setting up an inquiry into Grand Parents who take primary responsibility for raising their grandchildren.

The Senate Community Affairs References Committee has invited universal submissions by 14 March, 2014; aiming to produce its report by 30 September, 2014.

The clear truth in this matter is that the nurturing and protection of our children is a priority concern for any caring community. Grandparents understand that and deserve Community support when it is needed.

Jeff Trudgian