

## Why a Village?

The village is a metaphor for the First Floor Program because it emphasises an aspect of community which is not present in other organisations and, in many cases, is non-existent in modern society.

Villages are important as they are inclusive and evolve to meet the needs of their population. In this way they are able to become self-sustaining communities. Villages rely on close bonds between their members and, as a result, members feel comfortable, welcome and safe in the village environment.

The groups established here aim to meet the needs of numerous individuals who have entered our village over a period of more than ten years. It is hoped that you and the other members enjoy the experience, whilst learning things about yourselves and assisting others in their personal discovery.

You are an integral part of the village we have created at the First Floor Program and our café hospitality work program.

You are a valuable part of this community and we thank you for your special gifts. The insight and kindness which you bring help to enrich the lives of the entire village community.

## The First Floor Program also offers the following:

- Drug & Alcohol Counselling
- SMART Recovery
- Case Management
- Outreach Programs
- Family Conferencing
- Mentoring
- Parenting Training
- Financial Literacy
- Workshops
- Social Outings
- Professional Workplace Training (hospitality)

## FOR ASSISTANCE OR MORE INFORMATION

Telephone: 4229 1079 Fax: 4227 6457



### Community Programs

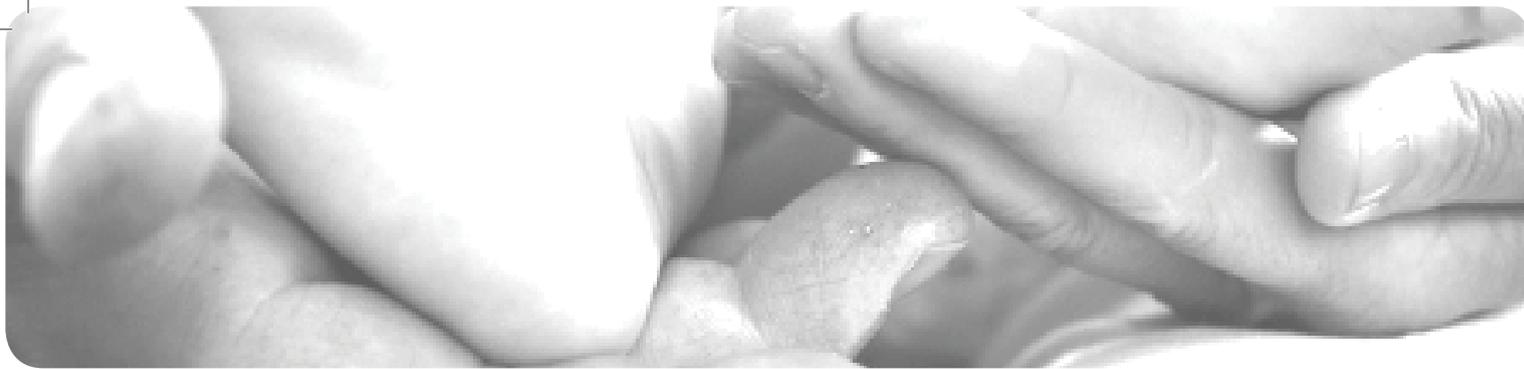
The Salvation Army  
Wollongong Corps  
Burelli St  
Wollongong

# off our rockers

*Relatives raising kin*



CARERS HAVE SPECIAL NEEDS  
CARERS NEEDS ARE GROWING  
A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO RECOVERY



In the past, grandparents have played a vital role in the lives of their grandchildren and have been called on for support during times of crisis. However, over the last 25 years there has been a dramatic increase in the number of grandparents assuming primary care and raising their grandchildren.

Research suggests that children raised by extended family members have better outcomes than those in other types of care and grandparents who raise their grandchildren do so because they are determined to provide their grandchildren with every available opportunity to have safe and healthy lives. Grandparents raise their grandchildren in the hope that they will be all that they can be.

But this decision often comes with its own complications and most grandparents raising grandchildren experience grief, self doubt and financial stress, as well as physical and emotional fatigue.

Sadly, grandparents often experience these issues in isolation, without the social support required, and are sometimes unaware of the assistance they may be entitled to or where to go for help.

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*“Coming to the meetings, hearing how to cope, teaching us our own feelings, the children also enjoy and look forward to coming.”*

\*Susan-age 53

*“A great relief to be able to communicate with a group of people that can relate to similar problems. To listen to issues and experiences of others and how they have managed them.”*

\*Kenneth-age 62

*“Friendship, support not only for my grandchildren but for myself. Meeting people who are in the same situation as we are. Just to sit and talk about our problems with each other is so beneficial.”*

\*Jan-age 75

\* denotes name changed

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Off Our Rockers is a support group established for grandparents raising grandchildren. We are a supportive group of grandparents who come together to share our experiences, offer information, provide advocacy and gain practical advice about raising grandchildren.

*Off Our Rockers is a safe space to explore what caring means for you and your family and get support if you need it.*

We also host workshops and invite specialists to assist grandparents with the practical skills and information they may require to help provide the life they desire for their grandchildren.

We aim to improve the greater community's awareness of the issues experienced by grandparents and the unique needs of their families, so that more grandparents are able to access the support they need.

We meet

**10:30 am – 12:30 pm**

**1st Tuesday each month** (over 50s)

& over a friendly coffee

**3rd Tuesday each month**

(except public holidays)

at **The Salvation Army**

First Floor Program, Burelli St, Wollongong

(between Corrimal & Harbour Sts)