Young and ‘care-full’: the hidden group of young kinship carers in Australia

Meredith Kiraly, University of Melbourne
Karen, Young Kinship Carer, NSW
Jo Roff, Integrated Youth & Family Services, QLD

ACWA Conference, Sydney, August 2018
Aims of the Young & ‘Care-Full’ Research Project

➢ To identify young kinship carers in Australia and explore their characteristics and support needs.

➢ To identify opportunities to better support young kinship carers and children in their care.

➢ To alert policymakers and community to the findings.
If you’re a grandparent raising grandchildren, you’re not alone. We can help you.
Research methods

Census analysis re demographic characteristics of young carers
36 interviews with carers, 10 with young people
Development and evaluation of a pilot support service
Publicity, knowledge dissemination & advocacy

Funding

2014-5: Seeding grant - R E Ross Trust
2016-7: Major grant - Sidney Myer Fund
This is the TIP of the iceberg: up to 5 times as many young kinship carers in multi-generational households.
A pilot support service?

Help with child care, respite care, education costs, etc?

Discussion Board

Webpage for service access

Telephone support - dedicated kinship care service

Extensive awareness-raising publicity

Help with child care, respite care, education costs, etc?
Integrated Family & Youth Services

IFYS is a NGO that has been servicing Queensland communities for 38 years. IFYS has a strong focus on foster and kinship care, with 50% of our carers being kin.
Moving forward - Supporting Young Kinship Carers (YKC)

IFYS have partnered with Dr Kiraly to seek funds to establish a YKC support service. This would involve:

• National public awareness campaign
• Telephone support with dedicated kinship care worker
• Webpage for support & resources
• Social media – connection and discussion
Karen and her husband took on the care of their young nephew as and niece as infants alongside their own two infant children, and their older visiting children. Their nephew and niece both had developmental issues.
Further information:
Meredith Kiraly,
mkiraly@unimelb.edu.au
0400 913659

‘We’re not incapable...’ (Violet, age 18 years)