

## **Social change and its impact on the grandparent role of contemporary Australian grandparents**

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Many of the social changes of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have had an enormous impact on the traditional roles of grandparenting. These social changes include the feminist movement of the seventies, advances in medical and communication technologies, changes to the traditional family structure, modern divorce laws, the increase in drug and alcohol abuse, HIV/AIDS, as well as an increase in child abuse and neglect. This paper arises out of a study that explored the impact these key social changes have had on the grandparent role of contemporary Australian grandparents. The paper discusses findings from interviews conducted with grandparents who reside in northern New South Wales. The findings have relevance to development of policies relating to child care, grandparents raising grandchildren and divorce law reform. Conclusions are drawn about further research needed into the impact of social changes on the grandparent role of contemporary Australian grandparents.