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# Community Connect

SPRING  
2015

## SPRING INTO ACTION

This Spring edition of Community Connect will focus on the issues and concerns of family violence, a social issue that affects so many members of our community.

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With the warmer Spring weather upon us, we all may be eager to get out and about in our community. Residents in Balclutha, may notice some new posters around town that feature local community members who are standing up against family violence.

Anglican Family Care is a social service agency that is working to bring awareness and solutions to problems that face our community, including family violence.

"We are noticing increasing referrals where family violence is present," says AFC Practice Manager, Kathy Richards. "These referrals are right across the spectrum – physical, child neglect, psychological, etc. I would say that 70% - 80% of our caseload includes some form of family violence."

With statistics like these, it's hard not to sit up and take notice. What can be done to help those in need?

The *It's Not OK* campaign now featuring in Balclutha is encouraging people to speak out in order to break the stronghold of silence associated with family violence.

The intent of this campaign is to motivate our community to take ownership of this problem and to work in partnership to bring solutions. Evidence that this is already happening is reflected in the active and enthusiastic participation of community members. If this campaign stops one incidence of violence, it will be a success.

To learn more, see this edition's feature article *It's Not OK*.



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# Michelle's Story



Michelle\* was introduced to Anglican Family Care (AFC) because her physician made a referral with regards to her son and his behaviour.

But after working with AFC social worker Jackie for some time, it became apparent that there was more going on in the home than a young child's behavioural issues. Jackie recognised this and promptly stepped in to ask the right questions at the right time. As it turned out, Michelle was living with a violent man who was abusive and controlling.

"One day Jackie came over for her regular visit and I was very upset," says Michelle. "Jackie asked me what was going on and I told her about my partner's behaviour. From that point on, the focus of our sessions was more on me and my relationship rather than on my son." Jackie worked with Michelle to help her understand the nature of an abusive relationship. She shared with her the Power and Control Wheel and helped Michelle identify how her partner's behaviours fit within this cycle of abuse. However, after a period of time things came to a head.

"Things got out of control and when Jackie showed up one day. I just burst into tears. I shared with her how my partner had been abusive that night. Jackie called the police and I was prepared to make a statement." Although it wasn't an easy thing to do, Michelle went to the police and was able to secure a Protection Order. It was the first step that allowed her to be able to leave this eleven year abusive and violent relationship.

Michelle reflects back upon what had happened to her, "He was controlling. He had all the money. He used to check receipts. I stayed at home to take care of the kids but I had no freedom. I wasn't allowed to do anything." At one point she thought she could thwart the physical abuse. "I bought him a punching bag to hit rather than me...but it didn't work."

Michelle credits her ability to leave the relationship to her access to the emotional and educational support she needed. "I wouldn't be out of the relationship without the support from Jackie. She was my rock. I don't have family here and so Jackie stayed with me the whole day when I went to the police. I'm so grateful to her." Through all the challenges, Michelle

is thankful to say that not only is she feeling better, but her children have changed as well.

**"The kids used to hit each other and yell and be angry just like their Dad. But now I have love and cuddles from them. I didn't have that before."**

Family and domestic violence is prevalent all throughout society. It is especially a problem within New Zealand and many groups are working hard to bring awareness and action for change. Michelle would like to see more people step forward and speak up if they see a woman in an abusive relationship. "I'm sure my neighbours knew what was going on. We lived next door to them for seven years and they never said a word to me. I used to run out of the house in the middle of the night screaming and my partner would grab me in the street and drag me back in. But my neighbours never mentioned it. If they would have asked if I was OK, I would have reached out for help then. But they never asked if I was OK. They just pretended nothing was going on."

Many lessons have been learned through this difficult experience. "I've learned it's OK to ask for help and to tell people," says Michelle. "It's also good to understand that there are other people out there who are struggling with violence. I wasn't the only one. No one should be treated that way."

Because Michelle had help and support, she had the confidence to leave an abusive relationship. Her abuser is now working with a counsellor and also taking anger management courses. Michelle is confident and optimistic for a better future for herself, her children and even her ex-partner. She's hopeful that sharing her story will inspire others who may be in an abusive relationship to seek help. "I encourage women to reach out to Anglican Family Care or Women's Refuge. You can have a better life and things can be different."





### How You Can Help:

- **Speak Out.** If you think someone may be in an abusive relationship, ask them if they are OK. Encourage them to seek help and be a friend to them by being supportive.
- **Be Aware.** Understand that many women in abusive relationships are ashamed or fearful of speaking up. Often we need to look for signs rather than words.
- **Be a Neighbour.** If you hear or see abuse going on next door, call the police.
- **Take Action.** You can help women like Michelle by financially supporting Anglican Family Care.

### Where to Get Help:

Anglican Family Care Dunedin  
266 Hanover Street Dunedin,  
Dunedin 03 477 0801  
Anglican Family Care Balclutha  
4 Clyde Street, Balclutha 03 418 2530  
[www.anglicanfamilycare.co.nz](http://www.anglicanfamilycare.co.nz)

*\*At Anglican Family Care we respect everyone who comes to us for help. Many are working toward a fresh start in life. So while their stories are true, client names and images have been changed to protect their privacy. Thank you for understanding.*

# ANGLICAN FAMILY CARE

joins the Family Violence Inter-Agency Response Service (FVIARS)

The Family Violence Interagency Response System (FVIARS) is an interagency initiative designed to more effectively manage cases of family violence reported to the Police. A key objective of FVIARS is to enable collaborative, co-ordinated interagency responses to family violence. The model provides guidelines for each of the agencies around the initial response, post event assessment, risk response planning, co-ordinated cross-sector support for victim empowerment, child safety, and offender management and accountability.

Police Family Violence Investigation Report (POLFVIR) events have increased in the last five years by 42% nationally. Staff at Anglican Family Care also report around 70% of the Families they work with every day currently live in or have lived in recent situations of family violence.

Anglican Family Care have embraced this opportunity for regular interagency meetings, information sharing and expectations of agency involvement to improve the outcomes of those affected by violence in their homes.

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**Silence is  
violence's  
best friend**

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OK TO ASK  
FOR  
HELP**

**0800 456 450**

## *It's Not Ok*

Impacting our community through "It's Not OK" campaign against family violence

*It's Not Ok* is a national campaign that aims to reduce and prevent family violence by changing the attitudes of society.

Jane Hutton, Anglican Family Care Team Leader of South and Central Otago, has been instrumental in bringing this campaign to the community of Balclutha. She's eager to raise awareness of this social issue and to get people talking.

Recent statistics published by The Ministry of Justice reveal that family violence remains one of New Zealand's most significant social issues. Last year, more than 100,000 incidents of abuse were reported to Police – that's around one every 5 minutes. In addition, New Zealand is recorded as having the highest intimate partner violence in the developed world and the fifth highest reported rate of child

abuse\*. To combat these statistics, the Ministry of Social Development has created the *It's Not OK* campaign which has been proven successful due to its support at the national as well as local levels. This campaign is unique because well-known community members volunteer to be advocates for the cause. They are called 'Champions' and are identified as local points of contact for those who want to seek advice and support.

*It's Not OK* was launched at the AFC Community Forum on 24th August where various members of the Balclutha community met to learn about AFC and the campaign. In attendance were local police officers Robin Hutton and Rochelle Gordon, as well as Balclutha Mayor Bryan Cadogan. They're supportive and enthusiastic for this campaign and eager to see positive results.

"It's an opportunity to raise the profile and acknowledge the issue of family violence," says Mayor Bryan Cadogan. "It's the first step to breaking down barriers that allow family violence to exist and presents the opportunity for open and frank discussion."

The Mayor is just one of over 20 individuals who claim the title of 'Champion' and is featured on posters that will be displayed in and around the community. These posters strategically promote local members of the community with the intention of getting people talking about family violence. "The posters are of people that we all know well," says Jane Hutton. "They send the message that this is a person you can trust and that you can talk to them if you or someone you know is having a problem with family violence."

The desire to start the campaign began about a year ago when Jane and her co-workers realised that they were working with many women who were unaware of being in an abusive relationship. Officer Robin Hutton also encounters this same situation. "We see families that don't think what's happening to them is family violence. There's the thinking that 'it's always been this way'. It's an inter-generational problem and because of that it's often accepted as the norm." He recognises that the community of Balclutha has seen an increase in the reporting of family violence over the years but also notes that the channels for reporting violence have been made easier.

Officer Hutton is hopeful that awareness and education can break the view that family violence is normal and acceptable behaviour. "Early intervention is what it's about. Prevention is a pillar of what we, the Police, are about. If we can prevent family violence, then we're seen as doing our job."

Mayor Bryan Cadogan also agrees in the importance of breaking the cycle of the normalisation of family violence.

**"The more society says it's not acceptable, the more change can come about. We all have a part to play and it's not just the police who need to be socially responsible."**

The "It's Not OK" campaign has been proven successful in other New Zealand communities and Jane Hutton, the local campaign coordinator, is hoping to bring that success to Balclutha as well. "We currently have five posters that will be prominently displayed in our community." These posters feature a diverse group of 'Champions' including the Mayor, Police officers, paramedics, the Tokomairiro High School Drama



group and Big River Bikers, as well as hairdressers from Hair Workz. "We intentionally sought a diverse group because we want to cover the whole community and we want it to be community owned."

A key aspect of this campaign is to get the message out that family violence can happen to anybody: people of any ethnicity, age, gender, sexuality or socio-economic group. Typically family violence is perceived only as physical violence with society often failing to recognise it also includes emotional and psychological abuse as well.

Hopes remain high for a successful campaign and raised awareness. "If this campaign stops one incidence of violence, it will be a success," says Mayor Cadogan. "I would like to see this campaign bring about a change in social attitude and a belief in a better future. If family violence stops here, in this generation, then that success will flow to future generations as well."

If you or someone you know is experiencing family violence, you can find help at [www.areyouok.org.nz](http://www.areyouok.org.nz) or [www.familiesfreefromviolence.org.nz](http://www.familiesfreefromviolence.org.nz)

In all emergencies ring 111; For crisis intervention ring Child Youth and Family on 0508 FAMILY or Gore Women's Refuge who cover the Clutha District, 0800 004343.

Anglican Family Care provides planned interventions. Please phone 03 418 2530 during week days.

*\*\*"Strengthening New Zealand's legislative response to family violence" Ministry of Justice, August 2015*





# Focus on

St Hilda's Collegiate School is living out their faith and has made the commitment to help those less fortunate in our community. Together with Anglican Family Care, they are eager to address local needs and concerns.

St Hilda's is achieving their goal by making donations and offerings to those in need. "Our offering is part of the Eucharist Service", says Gillian Townsley, Chaplain at St. Hilda's. "It is one way we can bring our faith to life. Our relationship with Anglican Family Care is helping to open eyes to poverty and need within our own community." Most recently the school has donated over two carloads of items to the AFC Food Bank. This was done in response to the increased demand on the Food Bank services stemming from the recent flood in South Dunedin.

Learning about those in need in our community has also inspired the girls at St Hilda's to take action. After hearing an AFC social worker speak, the girls felt led

to sew blankets and toys for Dunedin families that are struggling financially. The project and results were so successful that the teachers have decided to make it part of the annual curriculum. "Sewing blankets and baby items allowed the girls to look outside themselves. They were able to understand the need in our community and felt that they were making a real difference," comments Gillian.

Faith plays a significant role in St. Hilda's character and actions. "A Christian school is not only about going to Chapel, but about living out your faith in Christ. It's about demonstrating Christian values including social justice, caring for others and compassion," says Gillian.

Anglican Family Care is grateful for the support received from St. Hilda's and is thankful to be part of the school's culture and social education.



## COMMUNITY SPIRIT AT BALMACEWEN

The Anglican Family Care Food Bank was delighted to be the recipient of eight huge boxes of tinned goods, donated by the students of Balmacewen Intermediate.

We were so impressed by this effort, we decided to head out to Balmacewen to learn more about how they achieved it.

The Balmacewen School Council (pictured below), decided that they would like to help local families affected by the flood, so they chose to do a 'cash or can' mufti day, with all the canned goods being donated to our food bank. They had a great response from the

students, and the eight large boxes of tinned goods were collected and brought into Anglican Family by one of the school councillors, Sasha, and her father.

The flood event of June put significant pressure on our Food Bank supplies, so donations like this meant that we were able to continue to support families in need over this period and respond to the increased need.

It is heartening to see young people taking action to support their community. Top effort Balmacewen!

*Balmacewen Intermediate School Council. Back Row: Belinda Le Lievre (AFC), Fergus, Harvey, Tayla, Laura, Ruaridh, Ben, Maia, Sasha. Front Row: Cathy, Elizabeth, Ashleigh, Makayla, Brooke, Abbey and Gabi.*



# BIRD MOSAIC READY TO TAKE FLIGHT

Elle Brittain is eager to help her students create mosaics of New Zealand birds. Both Elle and her students participate in Anglican Family Care's Social Workers in Schools Programme at Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Ōtepoti. The project they're currently working on is called 'Tiakina te Taiao, Tiakina I a Tātou Katoa: Looking After the Environment, Looking After Us All'.

This project seeks to explore strategies of how students can look after themselves as well as others. Earlier this year, Elle and her students visited Orokonui Ecosanctuary to learn first-hand about native New Zealand birds. Now they're eager to work together to create bird mosaics that will be gifted to Anglican Family Care's new offices on Hanover Street. "The idea of the project came to me when I learnt that the client meeting rooms were named after New Zealand birds," says Elle. "We thought it would make a nice project for the students to create some artwork to be displayed for the community, all the while fostering an environment where the students learn the merits and skills of how to work together successfully."

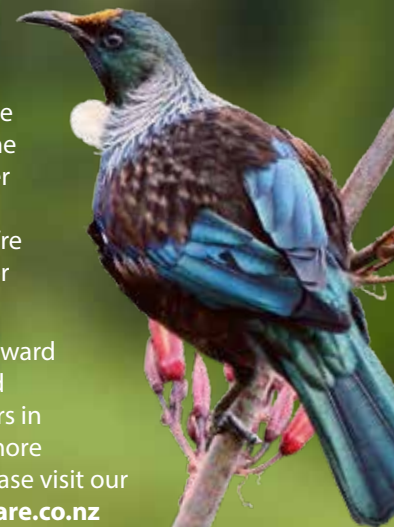
Social Workers in Schools is a voluntary and free programme that helps primary school-aged students build self-esteem and social skills. It aims to provide young children with the resources and tactics necessary to help them overcome life's challenges so they can be successful both socially and academically. "Some of our students are dealing with issues of grief and loss. Others are working through difficult problems at home," says Katie Baumler who is also part of the Social Workers in Schools programme.

"What amazes me the most is how resilient the children are despite what they've been through. Seeing the kids' faces light up is so inspiring."


In the past year the Social Workers in Schools programme has helped 258 students. Six Dunedin primary schools actively participate in the programme and the results have been very positive with 85% of parents reporting improvement in their child's behaviour.

Elle is also noticing changes in her students' behaviour as a result of this project. "I'm seeing the older boys start to watch out for the younger ones and take them under their wings. The dynamics among the girls is also changing and they're getting along and playing together better."

Anglican Family Care is looking forward helping more primary school-aged children through the Social Workers in Schools programme. If you'd like more information about this service, please visit our website at [www.anglicanfamilycare.co.nz](http://www.anglicanfamilycare.co.nz)



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# OUT AND ABOUT IN THE COMMUNITY

Cadbury's Choc Art of Creativity Workshops

Anglican Family Care participated in the Cadbury Carnival's Choc Art of Creativity workshops during the second week of the July school holidays.

The Choc Art workshops provided chocolate opportunities galore for children (and adults) alike! Everyone was eager to paint with chocolate, make chocolate moulds, decorate a giant cookie and then wrap it all up in a chocolate bowl.

A fantastic team of 14 Anglican Family Care volunteers assisted with the running of this event. Our volunteers collectively gifted over 128 hours during the Choc-Art Week to help support the work of Anglican Family Care. A fantastic effort from our Volunteer Team! Thank you, we couldn't have done it without you!

In return for providing volunteers to help run the Choc Art Workshops, event organiser, Cadbury, has donated the funds raised from the week's activities to Anglican Family Care. We are most thankful to Cadbury to have the opportunity to be involved in such a thoroughly enjoyable event. These proceeds will be used to help families in Otago become stronger and healthier over this coming year.

If you're interested in volunteering with Anglican Family Care, please contact Belinda at [Belinda@familycare.co.nz](mailto:Belinda@familycare.co.nz) or visit our website at [anglicanfamilycare.co.nz](http://anglicanfamilycare.co.nz)

*Islay (right) ChockArt participant, with AFC volunteer Derlin.*



To receive our newsletter please visit [anglicanfamilycare.co.nz](http://anglicanfamilycare.co.nz)

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