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Community Connect

CHRISTMAS
2015

A CHRISTMAS TO LOOK FORWARD TO

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Jasmine is the mother of four girls who is acutely aware of what it means to be a Mum and to care for a family.

She and her husband are eager to see their family is well taken care of, so when they noticed their daughter was behaving differently, they became concerned. "I

knew my daughter was different but everyone kept reassuring me that everything was OK." It wasn't until her daughter started school that the teacher suggested she may need some extra help.

Eventually Jasmine ended up in the hands of Anglican Family Care's social worker Jackie. "Jackie was great," Jasmine says "After every meeting I would feel better. She would help me get back to a

place where I could deal with everything going on. She helped me to feel capable and empowered."

Jasmine spent about six months with Anglican Family Care. In that time she worked with the Strengthening Families programme. "I loved this programme! It was fantastic. Even though the meetings are all finished, the structures are still in place and I find that very helpful, even today."

The Strengthening Families programme helped Jasmine to effectively coordinate care for her daughter. "Before this programme I was meeting with someone every day and it was getting quite difficult and stressful. When Jackie first suggested I try it, I was skeptical. But after giving it a go it really made my life easier."

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A CHRISTMAS TO LOOK FORWARD TO continued

The Strengthening Families Programme brought together all those involved with the care and diagnosis of Jasmine's daughter. With coordinated meetings, communication significantly improved. Jasmine felt her voice was being heard and everyone's time was being used efficiently.

During these and other difficult times Jasmine also relies on her faith. She trusts that God will bring the help she needs at just the right moment.

"When I was referred to Anglican Family Care it was reassuring to me. With my faith I know that Jesus is there and part of my day-to-day life, a constant companion, so having Anglican Family Care was a nice wee add-on."

With the holidays fast approaching, Jasmine is anticipating a special time with her family. "Things are calmer in my home now," she says "I'm really thankful that Anglican Family Care was there to help. They were able to provide a service that I didn't even know I needed. I would recommend Anglican Family Care to friends or anyone in need."

If you'd like to learn more about the programmes and services of Anglican Family Care, please visit our website at www.anglicanfamilycare.co.nz or call 477 0801. All our services are free and voluntary and we welcome self-referrals.



Big Value Christmas is Priceless

Anglican Family Care was one of several organisations who participated in Big Value Christmas.

In its second year, the event proved successful once again as families and children gathered to make crafts, exchange gifts and spend some fun time together.

Dunedin families flocked to the Big Value Christmas event held in the Octagon the second weekend in November. They were happy to learn about alternatives to big spending. Chris Watkins, event organiser, says it was an opportunity for families to create their own traditions at Christmas time.

Anglican Family Care helped children make their own holiday cards with stamps, stickers and felt-tip pens. Families could also take away free play dough, hand-print moulds and a 'How To' booklet of creative and inexpensive ideas for homemade gifts and crafts.

"This event is about challenging the retail definition of Christmas," says Chris Watkins. "The height of consumption happens at Christmas time and families can get into financial trouble with overspending."

Magdalen, mother of 6 year old Annabelle, found there were lots of things to do and many activities. She was pleased to see an alternative to the commercialism that can be prevalent this time of year and noted that some people can lose sight of what the holiday really means.

"It takes confidence for a family to say we're going to do our own thing at Christmas," says Chris. The Big Value Christmas event encouraged families to gain this confidence, break away from excessive spending and create a holiday full of cherished memories.

DON'T LET THE HOLIDAYS PUT YOU INTO DEBT

This is the time of year when many families overspend and end up in financial debt. Oftentimes the true realisation of their situation comes too late as fees and interest have already accumulated. Anglican Family Care's Budget Advisor, Fiona, says that families can stop the cycle of debt and have a more enjoyable Christmas.

"I see a lot of clients getting into financial trouble at this time of year," says Fiona. "They then come to our service in February when the credit card bills start to come in." She sees the stress families experience because of holiday expectations and understands that it's easy to commercialise the season. "Some families are feeling the pressure to buy extravagantly for their children or to make that big Christmas meal."

But there are measures that can be taken to avoid the pitfall of holiday debt. Budget advisers say the key is to make good plans. "Plan ahead as to how much you want to spend. Start saving money as soon as possible by setting aside a little bit each week. Over time that money builds up and then you can purchase affordable gifts."

Fiona has seen many of her clients make a turnaround. She specifically remembers one client whom she worked with for about a year. This client was able to pay off her debt and start the habit of saving money. "This was the first time she had a savings account. She was so happy," says Fiona. In the end, her client had stopped asking for emergency assistance and became more financially independent. "Having a budget and sticking to it worked for her. She was amazed she could buy things when she needed them and always kept an eye out for the sales. It changed her life."

The goals of the budgeting service at Anglican Family Care are to enable families and individuals to live on their income, to pay off debt and to save for the future. If you find yourself in financial stress, get in touch with the budget service at Anglican Family Care to help you complete a budget.

To learn more, please visit our website at www.anglicanfamilycare.co.nz or call 03 477 0801. All our services are free and voluntary.

For more budgeting tips and resources visit www.familybudgeting.org.nz/

Tips for An Affordable Christmas

- Plan Ahead. Buy items when they are on sale and don't wait until the last minute to make purchases.
- Put aside money for Christmas each payday.
- Make a budget, including how much you want to spend on gifts.
- Buy second-hand or make your own gifts. Give a 'personal' voucher for something you can do for someone (child watching, washing car, garden clean-up, etc.)
- Avoid borrowing or using a credit card.
- Be realistic about food and drink for holiday meals.

Please visit the Family/Client Resources page on our website for a free printable booklet of creative and low cost craft activity ideas.
anglicanfamilycare.co.nz



Poppy (aged 2) and Zion (aged 4) proudly display their handmade Advent Calendar. Each day suggests a fun family activity such as building a sandcastle or having a picnic together.





THE GIFT OF HELPING OTHERS

The spirit of giving thrives this season as volunteers from Cadbury spend a day helping others.

Donna and Ann are Cadbury employees who have a heart for giving. This the second year they have volunteered their time to help a local family during

Cadbury's Volunteer Day. Donna and Ann were part of a crew that cleaned the house and tidied the garden of a Dunedin couple who participate in Anglican Family Care's Respite Care Programme.

Julie, the homeowner, was thrilled to have the help. "Life's busy enough. There are things to do all day. The children and daily needs come first so it's hard to get to the little things. This is a real treat!"

Julie has been taking in children for the past eleven years. Her hard work and compassion for others hasn't gone unnoticed. "Last time we were here they had about thirteen children," says Donna, "They don't turn anyone away." Julie credits her compassion to her recognition that many children are in great need. She's turned that compassion into action and always welcomes children who need a place to stay.

It's this willingness to help others that inspires Donna to come back year after year. "I think there should be more people doing this - helping other people," says Donna. And true to her word, Donna does just that as she lovingly scrubs the walls of Julie's home.

If you're interested in volunteering at Anglican Family Care, please contact us at 03 477 0801 or community@familycare.co.nz

Yes!

I would like to make a difference to families in Otago

My gift is \$

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(Please put your name in the **Particulars** field and your phone number in the **Reference** field)

Please return this form to: **Community Relationships Team
Anglican Family Care
PO Box 5219
Dunedin 9058**

(Donations over \$5.00 are tax deductible. Charities Commission Number CC 24152)

You can also make a credit card donation online at anglicanfamilycare.co.nz

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