

COMMUNITY CONNECT

AUTUMN/WINTER 2024



ANGLICANFAMILYCARE



MIKE WILLIAMS
General Manager

TĒNĀ KOUTOU KATOĀ

Welcome to our Autumn/Winter 2024 edition of our Community Connect newsletter.

We share two client stories, the first themes on the transformative power of support and education, and how parenting interventions like Circle of Security helped parents, Lauren & Josh navigate challenges within their whānau. Supported by our Home-based Family Support team in Dunedin, Lauren shares their journey and highlights the importance of seeking assistance, and how learning effective communication techniques, benefited their whānau, helping create a nurturing environment for their tamariki to thrive emotionally.

Our second story emphasises the significance of perseverance in the face of adversity, as seen through Amber's journey from unexpected pregnancy and relationship difficulties to navigating the Covid-19 pandemic as a new mother – to where she is today in pursuit of a career in paramedicine. We share her journey as she worked alongside her Family Start Whānau Worker, who provided essential guidance and encouragement.

HAERE MAI MICHELLE



MICHELLE TUKANA
Central Otago/Queenstown Lakes
Team Leader

We are pleased to introduce Michelle Tukana, our recently appointed Team Leader for Central Otago/Queenstown Lakes.

Michelle is a registered Social Worker with a wealth of experience working with tamariki and rangatahi. We sat down with Michelle and this is what she shared with us.

How long have you been with Anglican Family Care and what's your background in?

I started with AFC in December 2023. I am a registered Social Worker with a background mainly in Child and Adolescent Mental Health.

What inspired you to pursue a career in social work/family care?

I have a passion for working with people and helping them to harness their strengths to make changes in their lives that they want to make, Social Work was a great fit for this.

What do you find most rewarding about your work?

Seeing the pride on people's faces when they achieve things they didn't think they could, and hearing the stories of how walking beside people has been pivotal in them moving in a direction they didn't think was possible.

What do you get up to outside of work? What hobbies or activities do you enjoy doing?

I love spending time with my two children and husband, out and about exploring the beautiful region we live in.

Michelle is based in the Wanaka Community Hub and leads a team of three social workers, who are based in Alexandra and Wanaka.

HAERE RĀ BISHOP STEVEN

We also want to acknowledge the outgoing Anglican Bishop of Dunedin, The Rt Reverend Dr Steven Benford.

Bishop Steven has been a great supporter, Board member, and friend of Anglican Family Care since his instalment in 2017. A familiar face at agency events and Annual General Meetings, Bishop Steven also offered his counsel and compassion at times of adversity.

I am particularly grateful for that - a man of enormous integrity and humility who seemingly always has the right words for the time.

Recently, we were able to farewell Bishop Steven at a get-together held at our Dunedin office.

We wish Bishop Steven, Lorraine (and hopefully Marley) a safe return to England, and every blessing for their next calling.



Bishop Steven at our 50th Celebration Dinner in 2022

Bishop Steven with former Director Catherine Goodyear at our book launch in 2021

OCEANS GRIEF & LOSS PROGRAMME

Helping people in North Otago learn ways to cope with their experience of grief in a supportive environment



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LAUREN'S STORY

Kids don't come with instructions but we can help.

Lauren and her partner were already parents to two children, working with Social Worker Steph from our Home-based Family Support (HBFS) team in Dunedin, when they welcomed their third child.

We asked Lauren to provide us with some feedback when she was preparing to exit our services; this is what she shared about her parenting journey and how we were able to help.

Lauren told us. "I was referred to Anglican Family Care approximately two years ago now. I'm a mum to three boys: aged seven, three and one.

It can be wild at times and no matter how many kids you have you still feel like a first-time mum each time. So, we needed support when my third son was born, and Anglican Family Care were amazing.

I did the Circle of Security (CoS) course with them. We have had many obstacles along the way (health and personal issues) but my Social Worker Steph accommodated all our needs and helped us get there in the end."

Our Home-based Family Support service involves working with whānau who want to develop and strengthen their parenting skills and confidence so that their tamariki can reach their full potential.

"I am feeling closer than ever with my kids now"

“Lauren was referred to HBFS by Paediatrics back in March 2021. When we first started working together, Lauren had two children, and not long into our work together she and her partner Josh welcomed a new baby into the family. It was a very busy household and Lauren and Josh were wanting support to help manage the challenges of raising a young family and navigate the different ages and stages that the boys were going through.” Social Worker - Steph.

“I really needed help due to not having family support. I had quite a traumatic childhood, so some of my parenting responses were due to me not dealing with my own problems. Steph helped me find a counsellor which was great, and I got started on that whilst starting the Circle of Security course. The help was amazing. I went from a mum who appeared in fight or flight mode all the time, highly sleep-deprived (I had breastfed for two and a half years which really drained me), was stressed out due to personal problems, and was someone who was always tense and always cleaning,” Lauren recalls.

“A large part of our work together was working through the Circle of Security Parenting Programme. At first, Lauren and I started this together and then we agreed that it would be beneficial for Josh to also participate. Thankfully, his work schedule allowed for this. They had more than their fair share of challenges thrown at them while we were plodding our way through CoS. At times this meant that CoS got put on hold as we needed to focus on other priorities.

What I really noticed throughout our work together was how well they were both able to put into practice what they were learning, even though there were periods when we had to put CoS aside for weeks at a time.

They worked so well together to support each other in keeping on track. By the end of the programme, the shift in them both was obvious. They were communicating better as a couple and really able to recognise the needs the boys were communicating through their behaviour.

The household was a lot calmer, and I could really see Josh and Lauren delighting in their children.” Social Worker - Steph.

“I now am able to have a healthy emotional response to my children. Take time to actually stop and think about the reason behind the behaviour, rather than the behaviour itself. I have a much clearer mind now, and I was able to work through some of my own stuff while doing this course.

I did this course with my partner of seven years, he really enjoyed it too. We have both matured and have become amazing parents to our children. My seven-year-old has ADHD so I first reached out to Anglican Family Care around Circle of Security, so that I could find better ways for me to communicate with my son and to help rebuild our relationship. I cannot tell you enough how much this course has helped.

I am feeling closer than ever with my kids now. There are so many ‘delight in me’, ‘watch me moments’, to be able to slow down and enjoy each of those moments is a blessing. The repair chapter was a great one as well, it taught me many things as an adult. For example, if I make a mistake and yell or do something, I shouldn't need to be setting a [poor] example to my child. [I can] apologise for what happened and do better - imagine if your parents apologised to you when they shouldn't have? It is quite powerful. I would highly recommend this service to others.”

Lauren and Josh's experience with Home-based Family Support service has had a profound impact on their family. They now enjoy a deeper connection with their children and relish every moment of their journey together. And enthusiastically recommends Anglican Family Care's services to others seeking similar support.

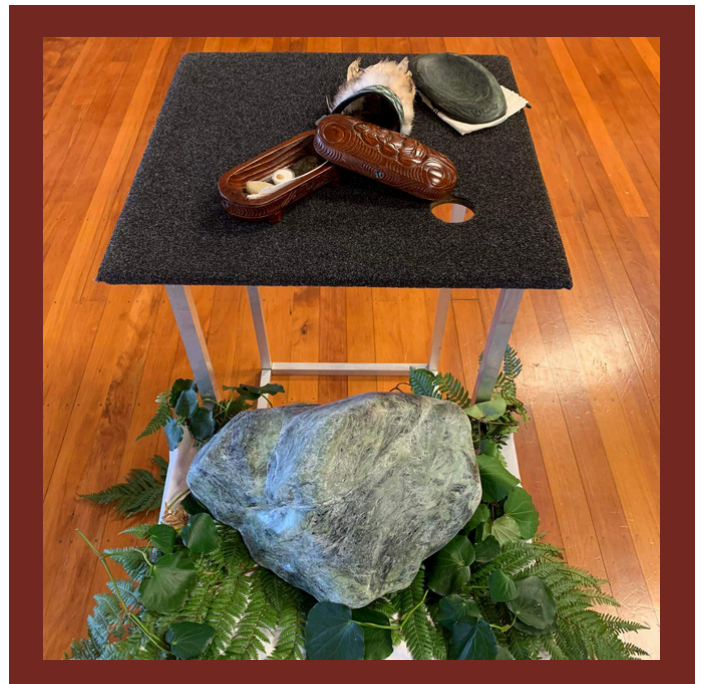
Client names and images have been changed.

NOHO MARAE AT PUKETERAKI

Puketeraki Marae in Karitane is such a special place to build our own tikanga and recently the agency had the opportunity to visit overnight again.

It created space and time to reflect on our bi-cultural journey and build on the work we have been doing, and well as reconnect with each other in person.

The blessing bestowed upon us by Matua Ewan who entrusted Anglican Family Care as kaitiaki for Te Puka o Takata is hugely significant in itself. The continued awahi and aroha offered to us by our kaumātua Monty and Mere Montgomery, as well as Desiree Mahy and Megan Ellis must also be mentioned.



“Te Puka o Takata”, or The Anchor of the People

RESILIENCE REWRITTEN:

A Journey of Hope, Support, and New Beginnings

Together, we continue to make a difference in the lives of whānau and empower them to make change that inspires hope for a better future.

Amber's world turned upside down when she discovered she was pregnant, despite being told by doctors that her chances of conceiving were slim. Complicating matters further, her relationship with the father of her unborn child had reached a breaking point, leaving her with a sense of uncertainty and vulnerability.

In her search for help, Amber's midwife introduced her to Anglican Family Care and the Family Start programme in Dunedin. Nervous yet determined, she reached out for support, and the decision proved to be life-changing. Amber's connection with her Whānau Worker Sarah was immediate, and she quickly realised she was in the hands of a caring and dedicated professional.

As Amber recalls, "Even though I'm really close to my mother and had her full support, I genuinely don't think I would be here today without Sarah – she has been my greatest support during [pregnancy] and afterwards."

Family Start is a home-visiting programme that focuses on improving children's growth and health, learning and relationships, family circumstances, environment and safety.

It helps whānau who are struggling with challenges or problems that may make it harder for them to care for their baby or young child.

Sarah's unwavering commitment and genuine care provided Amber with the strength she needed to navigate the uncertainties of carrying her baby full-term and the challenges of becoming a single parent.



“Amber was so eager to learn everything she could about pregnancy and baby development and followed the giant pregnancy book week by week. She prepped, planned and made lists. She was so well organised and we had to have lots of conversations about slowing down and enjoying her pregnancy.” Whānau Worker Sarah explains. “One of the very first things Amber said and continued to say throughout our visits was “I want my baby to feel loved.” There is no doubt that she created a family life for her daughter where she has felt nothing but love and safety.”

Amber’s journey took an unexpected turn when the Covid-19 pandemic struck, resulting in a nationwide lockdown. This meant that Amber had to make a difficult decision between staying in hospital with her new-born daughter or returning home with her baby who was only three days old. Faced with isolation and the fear of the unknown, Sarah’s consistent support became Amber’s lifeline. Despite not being able to have health workers or visitors come into her home, the regular phone catch-ups with Sarah brought solace and reassurance during those difficult times.

Reflecting on the impact of Family Start and Sarah’s support, Amber emphasises, “The circumstances that I had, being in lockdown and feeling isolated – I felt scared. However, having the consistency of support over that time, and the reassurance that I could contact Sarah, played such a big role in everything that was going on for me, despite being in lockdown.” The stability and care provided by Family Start gave her the courage and confidence to face her anxieties head-on.

Sarah recalls as Amber’s daughter was born at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, it was a scary and uncertain time. Amber had to navigate being a first-time mum during a worldwide pandemic.

“We had lots of phone and video calls during this time, it was a challenging time. Services and support that would normally have been readily available in our homes had to be provided remotely.”

Amber’s story doesn’t end there. As she embarked on her journey as a new mum, she found herself at a crossroads regarding her career. Feeling stuck in a job that was becoming increasingly dangerous and violent, she confided in Sarah about her concerns. Together they explored alternative pathways and discussed her aspirations. Despite initial barriers, Sarah’s unwavering support and encouragement inspired Amber to take action.

Driven by her newfound determination, Amber pursued her dream of entering the field of paramedicine. Although epilepsy requires a seizure-free period which posed obstacles, Sarah suggested nursing as a stepping-stone towards Amber’s goal. Her consistent support and belief in Amber’s abilities gave her the push she needed to overcome any self-doubts and pursue her aspirations. Today, Amber proudly shares that she successfully completed a pre-entry Level 3 certificate with an A+ and is ready to take on Level 4, the next step of her nursing goals.

“I am so incredibly proud of Amber! She has a strength and resilience far above what she realises.”

“Over the past three years, I have seen her reach highs, plummet to lows and then build herself back up again with a new sense of determination. Every goal she has set for herself has been achieved, and with a new level of confidence she has developed along the way. All of the tough times have been well worth it! It is such an honour to see her so settled and enjoying the life and home she has created for herself and her daughter.” – Whānau Worker Sarah reflects.

Amber’s inspiring journey exemplifies the profound impact that Family Start and the dedicated Whānau Workers have on individual lives. Through their support, people just like Amber find the strength to overcome life’s challenges, pursue their dreams, and create a brighter future for themselves and their whānau.

KIA ORA E TE WHĀNAU



Donna Davidson and Sarah Thornton
FUNDRAISING, MARKETING & COMMUNICATION TEAM

NGĀ MIHI NUI (thank you very much)

We have received some wonderful donations from our community and would like to take this opportunity to thank you.

We would especially like to thank:

- * Anglican Diocese of Dunedin,
- * Aotearoa Gaming Trust,
- * Beanies for Babies, * Dunedin City Council, * Dunedin Kia,
- * Kaans Catering, * Trista Townsend and the team from L J Hooker, * NZ Lottery Grants Board, * Otago Community Trust, * Otago Peninsula Parish, * Patricia France Charitable Trust, * Port Chalmers Women's Institute, * Pub Charity, * John Murphy and the team from Ray White (Little Ray of Giving), * Rotary Club of Dunedin Harbour, * St Andrew's Maheno AAW, * St Luke's Oamaru AAW, * St Mary's Mornington, * St Michaels and All Angels Church, * Leanne Black (Tall Poppy Real Estate), * the team at WellSouth, and everyone who has donated individually.

Last year we trialled a new initiative for our Christmastime donations, and invited whānau to come and look through our free Christmas shop (with their worker) in our Dunedin office. This empowered parents to be able to choose Christmas gifts for their tamariki. Each whānau was also gifted a "Christmas Cheer" box to help make the season that little more special.

During one appointment, our worker had brought her client through the "shop" and they had chosen some gifts for their children. The client was very humbled to be able to access the shop, and was not going to choose anything for herself, despite being encouraged to by our worker.

In the shop, there was a pair of white Adidas shoes. The Mum was able to choose these shoes for herself, replacing her previously unsuitable shoes, and is now able to achieve one of her goals of walking and exercising more, due to the generosity of our community.



Street Appeal

Become a volunteer at our Street Appeal in November. Contact us to find out how!

Upcoming Events

While we have not yet hit the chill of winter, we are starting to think about our next Spring Fling! Keep an eye on our social media pages and your email inbox for some exciting updates.



NGĀ MIHI NUI



A donor with one of the many quilts she and her friends donated to our Dunedin office. These quilts have been distributed around our offices and will help many whānau across Otago.



Some sweet Easter treats donated by the Port Chalmers Women's Institute for our whānau.

SEEN ACROSS OTAGO



Kaimahi at our recent noho marae.



Winter got a wee bit cozier with some winter warmers donated to our North Otago office.



We love getting out into our community and sharing what we do. Recently we were at the South Dunedin Market Festival and the Children's Day event at the Forsyth Barr Stadium.





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