



anglican  
family  
care

manaaki whānau

# Community Connect

## BECAUSE OF YOU... FAMILIES ARE RESILIENT

WINTER  
2020

Our services stretch the length and breadth of Otago; in this winter edition of Community Connect, we focus on our rural services and share both a young mum's and a social workers' experience, as they both reflect on how our parenting services help to foster positive change for whānau.

Natalya was 16 years old when she was referred to the Family Start programme in Oamaru by the local maternity service. She was worried and didn't feel she was as confident as other new mums and felt judged because of her age.

Family Start Whānau Worker, Becky explains, "It was clear that Natalya always wanted to disprove some of the negative stereotypes that sometimes exist about young mums, and her determination to achieve the life that she wanted for her whānau before her baby had even arrived was simply incredible. She had a clear idea of the kind of home environment she wanted for her baby and the values that she wanted to instil in her child. Natalya told us that she felt that people saw her as just a child herself and this created some anxiety for her."

"Through the support of my Whānau Worker Becky, I was able to develop my confidence as a parent and find solutions to help me cope as a young new mum."

"I had the privilege of working alongside Natalya and supporting her to set clear goals and take the necessary action to achieve these," Becky said.

Through Becky's guidance and support, Natalya began to understand the benefits of reading to your baby and started reading to him on a regular basis. "He chooses books over toys and it has helped increase his language skills", said Natalya.

Through the Family Start Programme Natalya was supported to breastfeed her baby and learnt how important it is for your baby's health. Child discipline is an area she admits is still a work in progress but is grateful to have the right tools to communicate with her son. "Instead of saying 'no' in response to his frustration, I now divert his attention by saying 'gentle hands' when he lashes out. I have also learnt about 'safe sleep' practices. Initially, I was scared when he was first born, scared of something happening to him. It was great having Becky by my side, someone to talk to for reassurance and to keep me sane", reflects Natalya.

"I truly feel that because Natalya created a vision of the life that she wanted for her baby before he arrived, she was able to work hard to ensure that this vision came to life. We were able to link Natalya in with the services she would need to achieve the life she dreamed of for herself and

baby, and provide reassurance and education to empower her to become the child-focused and protective mother that she is today," said Becky.

"Having the support of my (Anglican Family Care) Whānau Worker has helped me to be the parent that I am. I feel that I might have slipped into the way that I was parented without them being there for me. I was scared that my childhood might rub off on my baby. The support I have received helped me paint a picture in my head of what I wanted for him. Once I had that, I wasn't going to settle for anything less" said Natalya.

Natalya is now 18 years old, and living in a flat with her partner, the father of their child and is about to sit her restricted driver's licence.

**"EVERYONE NEEDS SOMEONE WHO WILL STAND BESIDE THEM AND SUPPORT THEM THROUGH WHATEVER LIFE THROWS AT THEM"**

*Family Start is a national programme, delivered by Anglican Family Care Whānau Workers, 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.*



.....

## FROM THE DESK OF MIKE WILLIAMS, OUR GENERAL MANAGER



What a challenging 2020 it has been so far - for all of us. As we shift into winter it is encouraging to reflect on the way New Zealanders have banded together in response to the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic. We know the threat may well linger for some time and that the damage will be widespread but it has been wonderful over the last week to be able

to escape our bubbles and gradually reconnect with friends, whānau and colleagues.

Our offices in Dunedin, Oamaru, Balclutha, Alexandra and Wanaka have been progressively reopening since we entered Alert Level 2, and we are gradually reintroducing home and face to face visits with stringent screening and safety processes in place. For many the alternative of video and phone calls will remain in place for now- there are definitely some anxieties present throughout the community after so long in isolation. And who was familiar with contact tracing 3 months ago? We certainly all are now!

The challenge of keeping the agency connected throughout lockdown was made all that much easier by the willingness of our staff to stay actively involved. Consistent ongoing communication was vitally important. Regular meetings using video conferencing have been invaluable, and we were

able to join together as a whole agency which was fantastic in the midst of the isolation. It meant we were able to provide a cohesive response that ensured our workers felt supported and connected and that we were familiar with the issues facing each of the communities we support.

We know the challenge ahead is likely to be significant but it is not ours alone, so linking with our wider community will continue to be fundamentally important. There is some outstanding work being done within the social service sector in Otago- the strength of this sector cannot be underestimated, particularly when we work together. Anglican Family Care will certainly play our part and our wonderfully skilled workers will ensure that we continue to make a difference.

Stay safe, and stay well.  
Ngā mihi nui  
Mike

## LONG SERVICE ACHIEVEMENTS



Recently, our wonderful practice manager Jane Hutton celebrated her 10 year anniversary with Anglican Family Care.

Congratulations Jane!

We are also celebrating with our fabulous Family Start worker Cathy, who has been with the agency for 20 years!





## HAPPY RETIREMENT, JILL

*Jill Tosswill, from the Central Otago Team, heads off into retirement this month. Vicki McDermott, Team Leader Central Otago/Queenstown Lakes Anglican Family Care – (AFC) sat down over a cuppa and asked her for a few reflections of her time working for AFC.*

*Jill, tell us about your background and what brought you to the role at AFC.*

I was employed by AFC in 1997 (I think) having been made redundant from my role as a Medical Social Worker at Dunstan Hospital. Within a week I was offered a position of five hours a week to cover a worker who was on leave. At this time, I was also working half time as an educator with Parents As First Teachers so the two roles dovetailed rather nicely together. Over the years my hours increased with AFC to eventually become full time.

My background is a really mixed bag. On leaving school I went to Kindergarten Teachers College, worked in a hospital cafeteria as an Assistant Supervisor, served tea on a tourist boat on Lake Manapouri, worked as the Manapouri PowerStation Clerk and went to work by boat, did accounts for a Chemist in Australia and worked for Trans Australia Airlines. I returned to early childhood work teaching at the Roxburgh Playcentre and then ran



playgroups for REAP.

My ventures into the world of social services began with an admin role for the Alexandra Task Force during the wind-down of the Clyde Dam project which was followed by roles co-ordinating support for the unemployed of Cromwell, setting up the Central Otago Friendship network and then going to university to gain a social work qualification

to support the work I wished to continue to pursue.

*How has the role changed and what changes have you seen?*

I have always appreciated the focus of AFC. To be able to hold families at the centre of the work and be flexible and creative to work in partnership with those families to cement a trusting relationship to achieve the goals they established. Without a doubt over the years the issues facing families has meant they present with more complex needs and this I believe is symptomatic of the increasing pressures they face juggling relationships, financial challenges, living at a distance from their extended families and often the trauma they experienced earlier in their own lives.

I have been privileged to work alongside many Central Otago families and it has always been wonderful to be part of celebrating change created during the journey we have undertaken together. Central Otago has been a great place to work and I have been blessed with some great colleagues, many of whom have enhanced my learnings, helped hone my practise and provided significant light relief at times when the challenges we all face seem all-encompassing.

*Jill, the Central Otago/Queenstown Lakes AFC team, your colleagues at Alexandra Community House and the wider Alexandra community will miss your wisdom, knowledge and humour, and style! Thank you from the families you have worked with over your long career with us, and the contribution you have made to your community.*

## RIVERSTONE CASTLE TOUR FUNDRAISER

Thank you to everyone who joined us on our Riverstone Castle Tour in February. It was a stunning day, filled with fun, laughter, and delicious food.

Follow us on Facebook to keep up to date with our future events

[www.facebook.com/anglicanfamilycare](http://www.facebook.com/anglicanfamilycare)





## AFC WISHLIST

Each of the following items will help our practice teams support parents/caregivers to develop and strengthen their parenting skills, so that their children are able to reach their full potential:

### Resources

- \* Developmental toys (wooden activity cubes),
- \* Tactile books for babies
- \* Jigsaw puzzles (peg, wooden, etc)
- \* Art supplies - pallet paint, paint brushes, stickers
- \* Safelet SOS-band [www.safelet.co.nz](http://www.safelet.co.nz) (for the safety of our practice workers)

### General

- \* Care packages (body wash, shampoo, toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant)
- \* Supermarket vouchers (to purchase milk formula)

### North Otago

- \* A life-size baby doll, with a soft body, suitable for demonstrating safe sleep positioning

## FAMILY START BOOK LIST

The following books will help us to support parents introduce the joy of reading to their child which will add value to their child's learning experience:

- Just like Kiwicorn by Kat Mereweather (hardback)
- Kararehe/Kanohi/Kakahu/ Nga Tae/Nga Ahua/Te Kaute series by Kitty Brown and Kirsten Parkinson
- I Made You A Cuddle by Ami Muir
- I Got You Some Kisses by Ami Muir
- 100 Hugs by Chris Riddell
- Any of the How Does A Dinosaur ... books by Jane Yolen and Mark Teague
- Any of the Charlie and Lola books by Lauren Child
- Where The Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak
- No Matter What by Debi Glori

**The full list of books is available on our website [anglicanfamilycare.org.nz](http://anglicanfamilycare.org.nz)**

## Thank you!

We have had some amazing donations from our supporters recently: cute polarfleece hats, jumpers and singlets and other children's clothing; and donations of funds, big and small. We, and the families in need we support, are extremely grateful.

We would also like to sincerely thank:

Tuapeka Gold Print,  
Otago Community Trust,  
Central Lakes Trust,  
NZ Lottery Grant Board,  
Dunedin City Council

for their support by way of grants in the last three months.

We also thank those who have supported us throughout the year, annual tax receipts been distributed via email. If you have not received yours and are expecting one, please get in contact with our Fundraising Team on [communication@familycare.org.nz](mailto:communication@familycare.org.nz)

## Yes, I would like to make a difference to Otago families

My gift is:  \$10  \$20  \$50  \$100  Other

Please charge my credit card:  Visa  Mastercard

Card number:

Name on card:

Signature:  Expiry date / /  CVC

I enclose my cheque for \$

I have made a deposit of \$  into Anglican Family Care's bank account 02 0912 0018828 07 (ref. my name and "Winter 2020")

I have made a website donation of \$  via [AnglicanFamilyCare.org.nz](http://AnglicanFamilyCare.org.nz)

My email address is:

My phone number is:

I would like to become a regular donor, please contact me to organise.

I would like some information on how I can help AFC by leaving a gift in my will.



**Please return this form to:**  
Anglican Family Care  
266 Hanover Street  
Dunedin 9016

*All donations are receipted. Gifts of \$5.00 or more are tax deductible. Our Charities Commissions Number is CC 24152.*