



Presbyterian Support  
Northern



WINTER 2024

## *Hello from PSN!*

We hope this edition of The PSN Post finds you safe, warm, and in good spirits as winter takes hold.

Thank you for supporting us – whether it’s through financial contributions, prayers, volunteering, engaging with our services, or choosing to include PSN in your Will.

At this time of year, families often face tough choices – like whether to heat their homes or put food on the table. With your support, we can ease that burden.

Family Works Northern helped over 10,000 clients last year, but the need for our services continues to grow. Please consider helping with a donation, to increase our support to families in need.

Together, let’s make this winter a little warmer and brighter for struggling families. Thank you for your generosity and compassion.

# THE PSN POST



Winter  
Appeal

**DONATE NOW!** [familyworksnorthern.org.nz/donate](https://familyworksnorthern.org.nz/donate)



SCAN ME



# FROM PSN CEO, DR. BONNIE ROBINSON



**Autumn is my favourite season of the year, closely followed by winter. I like the crisp cold but fine days of autumn and the fact that in winter there is usually a good excuse to stay inside, read and reflect a little.**

As we head into winter, PSN is reflecting on two big milestones. This year we commemorate the 140 years of dedicated service of PSN and we celebrate the hope that our crisis call line, Lifeline, has provided to our community for six remarkable decades.

For 60 years, Lifeline has extended its gentle hand to those navigating times of anxiety, loneliness and mental distress. It's a testament to the power of empathy, and the enduring spirit of humanity.

In this season, I find myself reflecting on what keeps organisations and people going year after year, always seeking to help people to make a better life for everyone. Faith plays a part for some, as do values of compassion and integrity. But mostly, it is a vision that says with help, and perseverance, we can make a positive difference.

As we head into the colder months, let's roll up our sleeves and redouble our efforts in the pursuit of a better tomorrow. Our Family Works Heat or Eat winter appeal invites us to extend a hand of warmth and sustenance to those grappling with the harsh realities of the cold season.

Your donations make a real difference in the lives of those in need. Whether supporting Lifeline in continuing to answer the calls of those in distress, or contributing to our Family Works Heat or Eat winter appeal to help families who are forced to make the tough decision between heating the house or putting food on the table – every donation counts.

Your generosity helps PSN to continue our mission of creating a better life for everyone. Be part of making a positive impact and spreading hope to those who need it most.

Nāu te rourou, nāku te rourou ka ora ai te iwi –with your basket and my basket the people will thrive.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bonnie Robinson".

**Bonnie Robinson**  
CEO, PSN



## EGGS-TRAORDINARY FUN:

### Our Easter Egg Hunt a Great Success

In the previous issue of The PSN Post, we hosted an Easter Egg Hunt, challenging readers to find hidden eggs throughout the newsletter. Eggs were cleverly placed within various articles and images, making it an enjoyable activity.

In May, we drew a lucky winner who is receiving a \$100 Prezzie Card. Congratulations to the winner, and thank you to everyone who took part! We look forward to bringing you more exciting activities in upcoming issues of The PSN Post.



## SOUP-ER SCAVENGER HUNT:

### Find Hidden Ingredients for a Chance to Win!

We're excited to introduce our latest challenge in The PSN Post. This time, we're inviting you to go on a virtual scavenger hunt for hidden soup ingredients throughout the newsletter. Keep your eyes peeled as you read – these ingredients might be tucked away in articles, images or sidebars. Can you find them all?

Once you think you've spotted all the soup ingredients, send us an email at [miranda.mcdermott@psn.org.nz](mailto:miranda.mcdermott@psn.org.nz) with your list for a chance to win yourself a \$100 Prezzie Card. Good luck, and happy hunting!



If you need to update your details; you wish to opt out of receiving The PSN Post; or you wish to speak to someone in our fundraising team – please call **09 520 8608** or email [supporter.relations@psn.org.nz](mailto:supporter.relations@psn.org.nz)

# EMPOWERING CHILDREN THROUGH PLAY THERAPY

Supporting children/tamariki is at the heart of the PSN Family Works and Shine KIDshine services. PSN's trained practitioners specialise in face-to-face counselling and social work to help children with a diverse range of needs.



Family Works and KIDshine help children facing various challenges, such as school struggles, frequent absences, bullying, anxiety, traumatic events like witnessing family violence, or experiencing parental loss due to violence or suicide.

Practitioners use a trauma-informed, strengths-based approach to support children effectively. This approach helps children process emotions like anger and grief in healthy ways, teaching them how to calm themselves and return to learning, playing, and participating in family and social life.

As part of the work that Family Works and Kidshine offer to their clients, the practitioner works with the child to find a range of approaches that might fit their needs. Some of those approaches are mentioned below.

Part of this work involves training selected PSN practitioners in sand play therapy. This supports children who have experienced trauma and struggle to verbalise their emotions. Sand tray therapy uses sand, water and miniatures to create stories that represent a child's inner world, offering a safe space to explore memories and experiences that might be too difficult to express through words.

Sensory packs are another therapy tool designed to help children with emotional regulation, featuring things like fidget toys, scented stickers, and bubbles. Each pack includes a journal with activities that focus on safety, as well as art

and drawing supplies, acknowledging that many children use art for emotional expression. These packs support children's ongoing emotional safety and provide them with resources to manage their feelings beyond the programme.

Strengths cards are used as a therapeutic tool also, to help children recognise and build upon their personal strengths. Featuring colourful illustrations and simple language, they foster self-discovery, goal-setting, communication and relationship-building. These cards are used to boost self-esteem, encourage children to identify their skills, and develop or strengthen coping strategies to use during challenging times.

LEGO therapy helps children boost confidence and develop social skills through collaborative building sessions in a small group setting. Practitioners act as a guide by encouraging teamwork, communication and leadership within the family unit. LEGO therapy supports children who have experienced trauma by providing a safe, structured space for expression, communication, creativity, problem-solving and social skills development – especially for those children whose families can't afford LEGO.

Across PSN's geographical region trained practitioners provide services for children within 184 spaces located in Family Works centres, primary schools and Shine refuges, or Shine or Family Works dedicated rooms.



**Some contract funding is received, but it does not cover the cost of therapeutic resources for that support children's therapeutic needs. PSN needs funds to equip each area with enough resource kits. Each costs \$1,500, and consists of:**

- ★ Sand play
- ★ Sensory objects
- ★ Connector games
- ★ Arts and crafts
- ★ Strengths cards
- ★ Children's books on a variety of themes (courage and facing fears, managing emotions and understanding feelings, belonging and connection, divorce and family issues, grief and loss).



## Total cost by location

Here's a breakdown of the number of kits needed and their total cost by location:



13 Whangārei \$19,500	2 Whakatāne \$3,000	19 Tauranga \$28,500	27 Waikato \$40,500	6 Taupō \$9,000
25 Rotorua \$37,500	35 Auckland West \$52,500	33 Auckland South \$49,500	19 Auckland Central \$28,500	5 Auckland Nth Shore \$7,500

### What we need:

#### 184 kits valued at \$276,000

Your donation will help make this happen, ensuring as many children as possible receive the care they deserve.

In Hamilton, a group of church friends has teamed up to raise funds for a kit to be purchased in the Waikato.



Please consider donating today or gathering a group together to start your own fundraiser.

Visit [www.psn.org.nz/donate](http://www.psn.org.nz/donate) or scan the QR code to contribute.



SCAN ME

**Every dollar helps. Donate today!**

## WELCOME TO SAM VON MELVILLE – OUR NEW PSN FUNDRAISER

**Hello! I'm Sam, and I'm delighted to introduce myself as the new Fundraiser at Presbyterian Support Northern (PSN).**

Despite joining just a few weeks ago, I already feel remarkably at home here. This feeling speaks volumes about the incredible people I have the privilege to work with and the supportive environment fostered by PSN.

In my short time here, I've visited some of our Family Works and Enliven sites, witnessing first-hand the remarkable support provided to our community. The dedicated and compassionate employees of PSN are truly superstars, and I'm eager to ensure that my work honours their efforts – after all, my role is a reflection of theirs.

As fundraisers, we carry significant responsibility. It's our duty to uphold the true beliefs and values of the organisation, accurately convey them to others, and ensure that our donors' trust is well placed. Even as a newcomer to the PSN family, I can attest that we hold ourselves to the highest standards in fulfilling these responsibilities.



If you're in a position to support us – through regular donations, annual contributions, one-time gifts, or bequests – please know that we take our custodial role seriously, and your support makes a huge difference to the communities we serve.

I eagerly anticipate further growth in this role and the opportunity to meet more incredible individuals, both within PSN and among our donors. So, from me to you, a sincere thank you, and best wishes always.



**As a Lifeline counsellor, you hear touching stories from callers that grip your heart; stories that evoke tears and inspire gratitude.**

Speaking to a Lifeline caller, now in her twenties, she shared that she relied on Lifeline through her challenging teenage years, saying “I wouldn’t be here without Lifeline, thank you”.

On another occasion, a man in his forties recounted calling Lifeline when he first arrived in New Zealand over a decade ago. Lost and lonely, he expressed how grateful he was to the Lifeline counsellors who supported him when he needed it most.

**It’s calls like these that make it all worth it and we’ve been hearing stories like these for 60 years.**

**Lifeline Aotearoa provides invaluable free support services to those in distress or crisis, WITH NO GOVERNMENT FUNDING.**

*“We receive between 7,000 and 8,000 calls every month, including an average of 17 calls per day from people at high risk of self-harm or suicide,” says Dr Bonnie Robinson MNZM, Chief Executive of Presbyterian Support Northern (PSN).*

*“Lifeline saves lives. It fills a big gap in the primary mental health space that people may otherwise simply fall through.”*

Lifeline and the Tautoko suicide crisis helplines operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Lifeline counsellors also receive and reply to 20,000 texts per month from people of all ages and all walks of life.

The most common issues people call Lifeline about are loneliness and isolation, relationship difficulties, clinical mental health issues, anxiety and depression, and suicide.

Lifeline counsellors are specially trained in supporting people at risk of self-harm or suicide, the most intensive mental health helpline calls.

*“The Lifeline team does a fantastic job, but we’re under more pressure than ever with demand remaining high, and costs increasing, just as they have for all New Zealanders. That is why we are calling on our supporters, community and the public to dig deep to help us to continue to provide this service. We want to be there for people for the next 60 years,” Dr Robinson says.*

*“Answering a call to the Lifeline helpline costs us \$36. The more financial support we receive, the more calls we can answer. People know they can count on us to be there for them 24/7 and we are committed to being here long term, but we need help.”*



**Celebrating 60 years**  
**LIFELINE**  
AOTEAROA  
1964 - 2024

**“I wouldn’t be here without Lifeline, thank you.”**

–Quote from a Lifeline caller

**It’s our 60th birthday!**

Please join us in celebrating our 60th birthday and making a lasting impact on your community – whether that’s taking on a fundraising challenge, or simply making a donation. Together, we can ensure that Lifeline Aotearoa continues to be a beacon of hope for those in need.



★ **Is your birthday coming up?**

Celebrate by creating an online fundraising page and asking for donations to Lifeline instead of gifts (link below).

★ **Take on a physical challenge to raise funds!**

Pick an activity – like push-ups or laps around the block – and set daily targets. Create an online fundraising page to share with friends and family, and keep them updated on your progress (link below).

**For more ideas, and to sign up, visit:**  
<https://lifeline-aotearoa.grassrootz.com/lifeline-s-60th-birthday>



**On behalf of the Lifeline Team, thank you for your incredible care and generosity.**



# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT COMMUNITIES FEEDING COMMUNITIES



Communities Feeding Communities INITIATIVE

## Victoria Hall's New Lease on Life

It's a pleasure to provide an update on goings on at Communities Feeding Communities (CFC), including the opening of the newly refurbished Victoria Hall, a building over 125 years old which now has a new focus of supporting community food security in Mt Roskill, Auckland.

Over 400 people attended the community celebrations at the official opening day in April, with highlights including live music, entertainment from local schools, fun activities for children, and a communal feast symbolising the rich tapestry of cultures woven throughout our community.



**PSN Community Relations Manager Anne Overton says the new facilities in the hall are impressive and will offer much to the community.**

*"Victoria Hall will allow us to do so much more to realise our vision to nurture the strengths of the local community. We now have a new community kitchen for hands-on and demonstration cooking classes and local use for events, an urban living room for people to meet in and a community hall that will be used by both CFC and The Storehouse, a community of faith that will be based there under the guidance of Reverend Fa'amanū Akeripa," she says.*

*"The Storehouse already meets fortnightly for regular Sunday worship. Over time, as the number of people who join us grows, we hope that people will see Victoria Hall as their spiritual home," says Rev Akeripa.*

*"A wide veranda at the back overlooks the gardens and the children's play area and there's a deck at the front where people can sit and talk. There's also an updated social food pantry space for emergency food parcels for locals and people referred by support agencies," says Anne Overton.*

*"Victoria Hall will allow us to provide budgeting support and deepen our relationships with the community and find creative ways to help people on their journey. We will host workshops, special events, and work with different community groups to help foster local wellbeing and food security."*

## Victoria Hall's History

Victoria Hall has a rich history dating back to 1897. Originally located in Eden Terrace, Auckland Central, the building was used as a synagogue before it was purchased for £40 by a group of 90 Rosebank residents seeking a local venue for both social and religious activities.

The funds for the purchase came from the English Quakers, and the hall was transported by a team of horses to the corner of Orchard Street and Rosebank Road. It officially opened on 20 October, 1897, serving as a space for social gatherings, community groups, and interdenominational religious events.

It was set for demolition, but was moved to the CFC site on Dominion Road, Mt Roskill, in 2022, as part of a joint initiative between PSN and the Northern Presbytery.

It has now been beautifully renovated and will play a key role in CFC's support for local community food security and a variety of community activities and events.



**Embrace the joy of giving – join us in supporting CFC's impactful endeavours today!**

Your kindness fuels our mission, empowering us to drive positive change in the community. Visit [www.psn.org.nz/donate](http://www.psn.org.nz/donate) or scan the QR code to contribute.

**Together, let's make a difference that truly matters.**



SCAN ME

# CREATE CHANGE BY RAISING AWARENESS AROUND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Light it Orange  
for shine\*

10-16  
JUNE  
2024



*Be part of our crucial Light it Orange appeal 10-16 June.*

**Every day in New Zealand countless lives are shattered by family violence.**

For over 30 years, Shine has offered hope and support for people experiencing family violence.

As Shine's annual fundraising campaign, Light it Orange, rapidly approaches, we are inspired by stories that speak to the strength of the human spirit in the face of abuse and how the support of frontline services like Shine's can make a huge difference in walking alongside people experiencing violence.

Deanna\*, a young girl whose family settled in New Zealand some years ago, is all too familiar with the pattern of controlling behaviour that is typical of family violence. While hers is a story of abuse and suffering, it is also one of strength and perseverance.

Growing up, Deanna was subjected to coercive and controlling behaviour from her father and brothers. She was mistreated and isolated. Her mother, who was trying to also manage the same strict control and manipulation as her daughter, was unable to help.

Even when she began tertiary education, Deanna's male family members controlled her every interaction, restricted her every move and she lived in constant isolation and fear.

Having been silenced and restricted her entire life, Deanna yearned for freedom and for the ability to have a voice and a brighter future.

It was a call to Shine that helped Deanna realise she needed to have a plan and choices to create a life for herself away from oppression. She was put in touch with a support advocate, and a plan was put in place for when the time became right to leave.

When the opportunity finally presented itself, Deanna moved into the safety of a refuge and began a journey of healing.

Making the heart-wrenching decision to cut ties with her family, despite her feelings of loyalty, and to build autonomy was by no means easy. With advocacy and counselling support, Deanna received the help she needed to keep herself safe.

She has now come to a point in her life where she is able to speak out against family violence and help fundraise for those



who are walking similar paths. Hers is not a story in isolation, it is an example of the resilience of survivors everywhere. Family violence exists in all communities and across all New Zealand postcodes.

As a Light it Orange fundraiser, Deanna hopes to encourage a dialogue that will allow more people to get support from specialist family violence charities like Shine.

Shine's mission is to stop family violence in New Zealand, supporting people who experience family violence to become safer, and those who use violence to take responsibility and change their behaviour.

## YOUR SUPPORT CAN HELP BRING ABOUT CHANGE!

Join Deanna and many others this June to support Shine's Light it Orange appeal, and help make a difference.

To join the Light it Orange campaign, make a donation or to learn more, please visit: [lightitorange.org.nz](https://lightitorange.org.nz) today.



SCAN ME

\* Name has been changed to protect identity

# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN ENLIVEN SUPPORT WORKER

**Ramona Crisalda, affectionately known as Chris, is an Enliven support worker, who really loves what she does. Each day, she makes a difference in the lives of her clients, like Viv, a woman living with dementia. Chris's day often begins with helping Viv start the day on a positive note.**

"If she's not awake, I gently wake her up," says Chris.

As an Enliven home support worker, Chris assists clients with daily routines, but her job is about much more than just physical tasks. It's about building relationships and creating moments of joy in the lives of those who may be struggling with memory loss or loneliness.

"With dementia clients, sometimes you have to go the extra mile like sitting with them when they have their breakfast and tea," she explains. "Because they're lonely, they are just alone in their houses. You have to spend a little bit more time with them because they really want someone to talk to."

Chris's day with Viv might involve gentle reminders about what day it is or helping her get dressed appropriately for the weather. Her patience and understanding are key when working with clients.

Chris also handles household management tasks to support people living in their own homes for longer. This involves some aspects of housework like cleaning and laundry and hanging clothes outside to dry if it's sunny. The expectation is that

clients also do tasks that they are still able to do, which supports them to remain independent. Her approach is holistic, focusing not only on the practical but also on the emotional wellbeing of her clients. "You need to have that rapport with the client, and the most important thing is you should love the job," she says.

"I love the job because it's very fulfilling, and you're getting paid while you are being trained. You help different kinds of people, and it just feels right that you're helping people."

For Chris, it's about more than just a job – it's about being a truly caring person.

"It's just nice and fun," she says with a warm smile.

Chris's compassionate approach to care is a reminder of the profound impact that support workers can have on the lives of those they work with, especially when they do it with love.

Chris exemplifies the compassionate spirit that defines the Enliven team at Presbyterian Support Northern. Her dedication to treating everyone with care and respect, as well as her commitment to going out of her way to help improve their day speaks volumes about the culture at Enliven. It's a place where compassion and collaboration



go hand-in-hand, allowing support workers like Chris to grow professionally while making a meaningful difference in the lives of those they work with.



To find out more about Enliven, visit [www.enliven.org.nz](http://www.enliven.org.nz) or phone **0800 ENLIVEN (0800 365 4836)**.

Or for Home-based Support Services or for Enliven Day Services,\* phone **0800 373 654**.

*\*A needs assessment and service coordination assessment and referral are required.*

**enliven**



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