



Presbyterian Support
Northern



SPRING 2023

Welcome to Spring!

As the flowers bloom and the days become brighter, we're delighted to bring you our latest updates, stories, and initiatives - with a focus on compassion, community, and support.

We'd like to give a special thanks to our dedicated staff, volunteers, donors, and supporters who make our work possible. Together, we are building stronger, more inclusive communities where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

So, grab a cup of tea, settle into a cosy spot, and enjoy this spring edition of the PSN Post.

THE PSN POST

THANK YOU!

We extend our gratitude to every individual and church that lent their support to our Heat or Eat? Family Works Winter Appeal.

The donations received have really helped us offer assistance to families who have had to face the tough decision between warming their homes and putting food on their tables throughout the colder months.

HEAT OR EAT?
No Kiwi should have to make the choice this winter.

familyworksnorthern.org.nz/donate

Please donate today to help families who are struggling.

SCAN ME

Winter Appeal

Family Works
NORTHERN

FROM OUR CEO



In the winter edition of our PSN Post we had the pleasure of sharing some thoughts and reflections from our new CEO, Bonnie Robinson, who joined us at PSN earlier this year.

Drawing from over two decades of experience within social service organisations, Bonnie has brought a wealth of knowledge and expertise to our organisation. Let's take a look at some additional updates from her inspiring journey:



What are some of the most important lessons you've learnt in your career so far?

There are many things that I've learnt, and I am still learning. Some of the most important are: listen, listen and listen some more. Listening helps with everything – with building relationships, with gaining information and knowledge, and with understanding the way forward.

Then I'd say always understand that there is usually more than one way to do something or resolve an issue. Being open to a variety of ideas and options from a range of people is important, it helps you to find the best way through.

Finally, own up to and learn from your mistakes, and don't be afraid to make a few. When you have made a mistake, critically reflect on what happened and why, and then move on with the new knowledge.

Bonnie, how do you think a faith-based social service organisation differs from a social service organisation that's not faith-based?

All non-profit social service organisations share the fact they are values based and mission driven. The difference with faith-based social service organisations is the basis of those values and that mission.

For faith-based, church-founded

organisations, the motivation comes out of Christian faith. The Bible is actually very clear that all people are called to love and serve other people and their wider community. Because God loves and cares for us, we need to show this also in practical acts of compassion. That is the reason why churches established social services.

We will be sharing insights and updates from Bonnie in future issues, as we continue to work together in transforming lives and supporting our communities through our mission-driven efforts.



EMBRACING HOPE: LIFELINE'S JOURNEY TOWARDS MENTAL WELL-BEING IN NEW ZEALAND

Mental Health Awareness Week, 18 to 24 September, is an annual occasion with great significance for our country. During this week, our nation can shine a spotlight on mental well-being and strive to foster awareness, empathy, understanding and compassion for those impacted by mental health challenges.

At Lifeline, we want to break down the stigma surrounding mental health and promote a society where everyone feels supported and empowered to seek help when needed.

Despite good progress, the quest for mental well-being among New Zealanders is ongoing. As a nation, we need to persevere to ensure that

we have a society where mental health is as much of a priority as physical health, and where support and resources are accessible to everyone.

Lifeline is the oldest helpline in New Zealand and has been helping Kiwis in distress for nearly 60 years. The need for our service is just as high as ever.



We have two 24/7 helplines – one that is available to support everyone facing mental distress or challenges in their daily lives and our suicide crisis helpline. Lifeline is here for EVERYONE – offering a compassionate and understanding shoulder to lean on during difficult time.

Countless individuals in communities across New Zealand still struggle silently with the burden of mental health issues. They could be our friends, family, colleagues and neighbours who are battling challenges such as anxiety, depression, job loss, financial worries, loneliness, relationship problems, addiction, family violence, and a variety of other issues that can have a ripple effect on mental well-being.

At Lifeline, we are dedicated to promoting well-being and ensuring a supportive environment for all New Zealanders. Our trained counsellors and volunteers provide a caring presence and listening ear 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Here are some helpful mental health tips for you... and we encourage you to pass these on to anyone you feel may benefit from them:

1

Be kind to yourself

When you're feeling down, it's easy to be hard on yourself. While you might not be of the mind to congratulate or compliment yourself, try being compassionate. And here is a little bonus hint – if you really are struggling to be kind to yourself, do something nice for someone else. Then, compliment yourself on doing it!

2

Exercise

Even taking a short walk or climbing a flight of stairs can reduce stress and increase your alertness. A regular exercise routine can boost one's mood, increase concentration and even help alleviate symptoms of anxiety and depression.

3

Eat healthy

Balanced eating means including vegetables, fruits and nutritious foods. Staying hydrated with water is also important. In addition, cultivate a healthy attitude towards food – savour meals with friends, explore new flavours and avoid obsessing. Should your relationship with food impact your mental or physical health, seek help and learn about eating disorders.

4

Breathe deeply

Just try it. Take in a nice slow breath. Start from your belly, expand through your ribs, chest and lungs. Breathe out just as slowly. Counting can help ("1, 2, 3, 4, 5..."). Repeat.

If you need our support,
please call **0800 LIFELINE (0800 543 354)** or text **4357**.

For more detailed resources, you can take a look at our website, www.lifeline.org.nz/services.

By prioritising preventative measures and proactive support, we hope to create a nurturing space that empowers everyone to thrive and tackle challenges before they escalate into a crisis.

The generosity of compassionate New Zealanders like yourself plays a significant role in helping Lifeline answer calls and respond to texts. Remember, we are not government funded.

We are so grateful to our supporters for their commitment to helping us reduce distress and save lives.

Together, we can build stronger, more supportive and more resilient communities by creating positive change and making a lasting impact on the mental health of those in New Zealand.



To learn more about what we do at Lifeline, or to get involved in fundraising initiatives you can implement in your local community – please contact **leanne.newland@lifeline.org.nz**, or visit us at **www.lifeline.org.nz**





EMPOWERING CHOICE AND FLEXIBILITY IN DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES



“We originally started with 12 clients, and now we have over 2,000.”

Enliven Individualised Funding was created for clients under 65 years of age who have disabilities.

We support them and their families to have greater autonomy and control over their care – for example, helping them to customise their support services according to their unique needs, preferences and schedules.

This personalised approach enables clients to have greater independence and improves their overall wellbeing.

The Individualised Funding model offers a range of advantages that significantly enhances the client’s experience, especially the freedom it provides in selecting their support staff. Clients are able to handpick individuals who resonate with their individual goals and requirements, creating meaningful connections that positively impact their daily lives.

Individualised Funding Regional Manager Janette Third says that Individualised Funding ensures families and the disabled people themselves are getting the care they really want.

“If you have a disability, you get your needs assessed and then you can be allocated some funding to purchase support services. The key advantage of Individualised Funding is that you’ve got the choice as to whom you employ, when they come, and what tasks they do – and you can purchase services or items that will help you live a really good life.”

Enliven Individualised Funding is designed to adapt to the unique lifestyles and schedules of clients. They have the liberty of being able to organise the service at times that suit them, providing greater flexibility and convenience. Whether it’s personal care, household tasks, or other things like community involvement, activities or lessons, respite care, or assistance in obtaining items that support their disability – the funding covers a wide array of helpful services.

“Previously, if you needed a break from being the parent of a child with high and complex needs, you may be living in West Auckland but the child would have to travel to South Auckland to be in a residential home for the weekend, and people just didn’t want that for their children. Now, they can receive that

same amount of funding but can choose whether they pay someone to look after their child, pay for a school holiday programme for them, or cover activities for them – like horse riding or Scouts. As long as the main carer and the person with the disability are having a break, the flexibility is there.

“Clients get to choose how they spend their funding; it’s not prescriptive in any way. There are some beautiful stories of how funding has been used. My favourite is where a family used it to help their autistic son with communication. He was about seven at the time, and they used the funding to pay for a communication course for him. Because of that, he is now able to tell them that he loves them... that’s the magic of it.”

The service is provided in Auckland, Northland, Waikato, Lakes and the Bay of Plenty. We originally started with 12 clients – now we have more than 2,000.

Individualised Funding also gives clients the autonomy to manage the payment and other employment aspects of their support staff, streamlining the process and fostering a sense of responsibility and control.



Enliven Individualised Funding is a testament to the power of personalisation in fostering positive change and cultivating a supportive environment where everyone can thrive.

Do you know someone who could benefit from hearing more about Enliven Individualised Funding? Enquiries can be made to JanetteT@psn.org.nz, or by calling **0800 IFENLIVEN (0800 433 654 836)**.

COMMUNITIES FEEDING COMMUNITIES (CFC) UPDATE



Meet Pascal, our new Community Co-ordinator

We are happy to introduce Pascal Gillies, our new CFC Community Co-ordinator, whose wealth of experience in community development and environmental work makes him a valuable asset to our team.

Pascal writes:

"I feel privileged to join the Communities Feeding Communities initiative and work alongside community champions, and PSN. The holistic approach to supporting and empowering our community aligns with my world view. I graduated with a Bachelor of Applied Science in Environment the week before starting here.

Community-led development which enhances social co-operation is one of the most powerful tools we have to create resilient communities that are able to take action addressing social inequalities, environmental issues, and climate change.

A welcoming community space which fosters a strong sense of belonging is a beautiful place to begin.

New Zealand produces enough kai to feed 40 million people a year, though most of that is exported overseas. Access to locally grown and fresh, nutritious produce is something everyone in this country should have access to, though we have 1 in 5 children living with food scarcity.

Growing food in local urban environments can reduce our carbon footprint and increase knowledge around seasonality and how extreme weather events impact food crops. Community gardens help enhance social cohesion and create a platform that supports intergenerational and culturally diverse relationships.

There are three gardens we have been developing with our community. Our community gardens in the front are where locals can come and gather leafy greens or herbs they may need for a meal.

We hold regular gardening sessions where we plant, weed, tend to the beds, and harvest produce for our produce packs, kai parcels, and pātaka kai. This is an opportunity for locals to connect with one another, learn, and share knowledge. Locals will often tell us the types of things they want to learn to grow, and what they like to use.

The allotment gardens are currently in pilot phase, where individuals or families can have access to an allotment for one year. They will make a small contribution to cover some of the basics they will need to get started, and while working with us we help them upskill, grow delicious food, and develop the knowledge they need to establish their own thriving gardens at home - be it container gardening, or front/backyard gardening. Everything they grow in



Pascal Gillies, new Community Co-ordinator at CFC

their allotment bed is theirs, and once our glasshouse is completed there will be more capacity to raise from seed and increase skills around this.

Our (micro) food forest includes fruit trees, shrubs, herbs, flowers and (hopefully) edible mushrooms. A range of functional species is established in this space, helping attract pollinators and other beneficial insects, as well as producing edible fruits for our community."



COOKING FOR COMMUNITY

In June, our inaugural CFC pilot cooking class programme began. This culinary venture unfolded over four weeks, guided by the talented Auckland cook, food writer and stylist Jane Rangiwhia.

Jane is a generous and passionate educator, who shared her knowledge with the local community. She aims to warm hearts and souls with elegant, accessible dishes crafted from quality, whole ingredients for uncomplicated, healthy, delicious meals.

Herbs and fresh vegetables collected from the community gardens were used as often as possible. The CFC kitchen brimmed with vibrant energy and laughter, as people from different backgrounds and cultures connected together to learn new skills, flavour combos and recipes.

Each week, in addition to enjoying the meals prepared at the classes, participants received convenient take-home kits containing all the ingredients and recipe instructions, allowing them to share their new-

found skills with their families at home.

Over the four-week course, the class learnt to cook: Caramelised Onion and Potato Soup; Macaroni Cheese; Meatballs and Mash; Fish Pie and Salad; and Chicken Drumstick Tray Bake.

Teaching the community how to cook offers numerous benefits – enriching lives and fostering a healthier, more connected society.

The classes empower healthier food choices by teaching cost-effective home cooking, fostering self-sufficiency and reducing reliance on pricey takeaway or packaged meals. This also leads to improved family budget management.

The classes help build confidence and independence in the kitchen while encouraging social interactions, inclusivity, and bonding through the act of preparing and enjoying meals together. These shared experiences strengthen social ties and create a supportive network.

They also help emphasise sustainable practices, such as reducing food waste and utilising locally sourced, seasonal ingredients – benefitting both individuals and the environment.

Skills learnt can extend beyond the kitchen – equipping individuals with valuable life skills like time management, organisation and multitasking.

Jane's commitment to giving back is a testament to her belief in the power of food to bring people together, nourish the soul, and foster positive change.

After the success of the first community cooking classes, another series with Jane started on 17 August. We look forward to seeing what other delicious meals they learn to create!



Meal ingredients



Cooking in progress



Time to serve up!

To see more up-to-date photos, stories, information and details about what's happening at CFC, follow us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/CommunitiesFeedingCommunities



Embrace the power of giving – please consider supporting CFC's inspiring work today! Your generous donations enable us to continue our initiatives. Contribute now by visiting www.psn.org.nz/donate or simply scan the QR code.



TOGETHER, WE CAN CREATE POSITIVE CHANGE IN THE COMMUNITY.

BRIGHTEN THE FUTURE FOR YEARS TO COME



For nearly 140 years, Presbyterian Support Northern (PSN) has been dedicated to transforming the lives of countless individuals in various circumstances, helping foster a more positive and promising future for them.

At the forefront of everything we do at PSN is the vision to create a better life for everyone. Our mission is to enable positive change within our communities.

We do this by:

- providing high-quality services that achieve results
- working with others effectively
- actively supporting community initiatives.



Many amazing initiatives have been made possible thanks to compassionate individuals who shared the vision of a brighter tomorrow and chose to bequest or leave a gift to PSN in their Will.

By demonstrating their alignment with PSN's commitment to providing help and support to people in all circumstances, bequestors have been one of the driving forces behind the transformative work we've been able to achieve.

Why should I include PSN in my Will?

PSN provides a wide range of services which can be adapted to the needs of the community. Some funding comes from government contracts and investment earnings, yet we also rely on grants, donations, gifts in Wills (bequests) and fundraising from the community in order to continue our services.

Leaving a gift to PSN in your Will can have a strong positive impact for the future, as we continually update and upgrade our services to reflect the changing needs within our communities.

How are bequests used?

The contributions we receive through bequests or gifts in Wills are mostly directed to funding our services that need it the most at the time.

However, if there is a specific area of our work that is of special interest to you, please ensure that is clearly noted, or you may choose to contact us to discuss it.

I'd like to contribute, but I'm not sure I have enough money to leave anything behind for PSN.

The majority of bequests or gifts in Wills we receive come from individuals who aren't traditionally labelled as 'wealthy'. Leaving a gift is an opportunity open to anyone.

Each and every contribution, regardless of size, holds immense value in supporting our work with individuals caught in heart-rending circumstances as we strive to help them create a better life.

Your gift, no matter how big or small, truly makes an impact.

Shouldn't I leave my money to my family?

Definitely. After taking care of your loved ones, we ask that you consider leaving a bequest to PSN. Including PSN will be a testament to the values you hold dear.

An alternative way to make a gift in your Will is to include an additional fictitious child to your family – a charity child. A portion of your estate could be left to your charity child. As an example – if a family has three children, the estate would be divided by four, with the fourth 'child' representing the charities you want to support.

Does PSN need to be notified that I will be leaving a gift in my Will?

You don't need to inform us of your gift; however, letting us know is important because it gives us the opportunity to thank you for your generosity. It also ensures that we can stay in touch and keep you up to date on how PSN is responding to the needs within the community.

What happens if I change my mind and remove PSN from my Will?

You are free to change your mind at any time, whether or not you have informed us that you will be leaving a gift to PSN in your Will.

I need some time to think about this – when is it best to get in touch?

Please take the time you need. A gift in your Will is a big decision and could make a significant change in the community.

HOW CAN I ACCESS MORE INFORMATION?

If you'd like to know more about making a gift in your Will, please get in touch with our Planned Giving Coordinator, Vivienne Riddell, on 09 520 8628 or 021 329 938, or email vivienne.riddell@psn.org.nz. She would love to answer any questions you have about leaving a gift in your Will and how your gift will be used by PSN.





ILLUMINATING HOPE AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE

The week of 12 to 18 June was an important period for us as we brought our focus to Shine’s annual Light it Orange appeal.

The aim of Light it Orange is to raise awareness around family violence and generate much-needed funds to enable Shine to help stop the violence. We are incredibly grateful to all those who got on board this year to support the cause... whether it was through individual fundraising, corporate or school fundraising, organising an event, or another way – every dollar helps make a difference.

For too many Kiwis, sadly, home is not a place of safety – it’s a place of fear and shame, hidden behind closed doors.

Everybody has a part to play in reducing our rates of family violence in New Zealand.

Shine Senior Family Violence Advisor and Light it Orange spokesperson Rachel Kain explains.

“Over half of the women in New Zealand have experienced family violence in their lifetime. It’s a staggering statistic and one that’s easy for people to feel overwhelmed by, but there are things we can all take on to do something about it. You can donate or get a group together to fundraise. You can also educate yourself on how to safely respond to someone who confides in you that they are in this dangerous situation.

“Chances are most people will know someone – whether it’s a friend, neighbour, colleague or a family member – who is experiencing family violence from a family member.”

If you’re concerned about a friend, neighbour or family member, call the Shine helpline 24/7 for advice on 0508 744 633 or use our live web chat service. If you know someone’s in danger, call 111 now.



Our aims in addressing family violence are hopeful, positive and optimistic. We want people to feel that there is a light shining on this terrible problem in New Zealand and that there’s some brightness ahead.

We are reliant on donations to help provide our services. You can be part of the solution! Visit www.psn.org.nz/donate or scan the QR code.

Here are seven simple, practical things you can do to help:



- 1. “I believe you”** – talking about family violence is deeply personal and courageous. If someone shares their experience with you, acknowledge this in your response, thank the person for telling you and don’t judge them. Always treat people in a way that upholds their dignity.
- 2. Don’t push the person to leave** – they know their partner (or whoever is using violence against them) better than anyone, and will already be trying to do things to keep themselves – and their children – safe.
- 3. Take their lead** – support their priorities and don’t force them to do something they’re not ready for or don’t want to do. Help in practical ways with transport, appointments or child-minding. People experiencing abuse who have children often prioritise their children’s wellbeing over their own, so ask how you can help with the kids. If there is violence happening at home, children are directly experiencing it.
- 4. Don’t make promises you can’t keep** – it’s not your role to save the day. Let the person know that help is available and support them in making decisions, rather than guarantee their safety or promise you can make the violence stop.
- 5. Stay connected** – isolation is a key tactic of family violence. By staying connected, even if it might feel like you aren’t doing anything or it might be frustrating at times, you are helping them resist the control. Let the person know you’re there for them if and when they want to talk to you and continue to build trust with them. Take their lead on how and when to contact them.
- 6. Find out about resources in your community that will help** – to find your local service, call our free 24/7 Shine helpline (0508 744 633); offer to make the call together or let the person use your phone to make the call. You can also find more information on our website, and can access our live web chat service – www.2shine.org.nz. Visits to our site can be done incognito, using the ‘hide my visit’ option at the top of the main menu tab.
- 7. Challenge attitudes** – family violence comes from people believing they have the right to control and abuse others. Respectfully and safely challenge attitudes. Let’s make family violence unacceptable for all.



TOGETHER LET’S STOP THE VIOLENCE. YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE.