Presbyterian Support Northern



SUMMER 2026/27

THE PSN POST

Being There When It Matters



For some, Christmas is a time of joy and togetherness. For others, the pressure of gifts, events, and bills can feel overwhelming. For someone grieving, an empty chair can be hard to face. And for someone experiencing a crisis, getting through the day can be an achievement.

Whatever the season brings, we continue to be there. Over the holiday period – and every other day – our teams are there when it matters most: helping an older person living with dementia remain at home, answering a call from someone worried about a brother in crisis, helping a young family through financial hardship, or welcoming a mother and her children into a safe place where they can begin their journey forward.

While there is much to be grateful for, this year has also brought uncertainty and loss to PSN. After over 20 years of providing home-based support services across Auckland, Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora has not renewed Enliven's government contract. We are deeply saddened by this decision, particularly for the clients who have trusted our service and come to rely on the familiar faces of their caregivers, and for the 320 staff roles affected across our organisation.

There is uncertainty ahead as the service transitions to new providers from March 2027. But there is also much to be proud of. For more than 20 years, our Enliven teams have shown what it means to put people first. Their commitment has not wavered, and our mission – a better life for everyone – remains at the heart of everything we do.

As 2026 comes to a close, we hold both gratitude and sadness. We celebrate the difference our people make, while reflecting on what and who we are saying goodbye to. To our staff, volunteers and everyone who stands alongside PSN, thank you. Your generosity helps us continue to be there when it matters.

Whatever Christmas looks like for you, I hope you find time to enjoy, to rest, and to find hope for the year ahead.

With every blessing,

Shaun Greaves
CEO, Presbyterian Support Northern

Christmas:

The Moments That Matter



Christmas is often measured in the little things – a warm greeting, wrapped gifts under the tree, the joy of seeing loved ones, a good laugh with friends, playing board games after dinner. For many of us, these moments are simply part of Christmas. But for someone feeling lonely, under pressure or experiencing family violence, they can carry a different weight. And when life is already feeling harder than usual, this time of year can be difficult to get through.

At PSN, we see how much kindness and connection can mean to people, not only at this time of year but long after the festive season has passed. Here are just some of the meaningful moments you've helped make possible this year.

Shine – The moment someone reaches safety

Christmas doesn't feel peaceful for everyone. For individuals and children experiencing family violence and abuse, the festive season can be frightening, uncertain and isolating. Shine provides refuge, safety and wrap-around support to help people escape harm and rebuild their lives. With Shine's support, people can find a safe place to begin healing, regain their independence, and look towards a future free from violence.

1325 women and children were supported by Shine to be safe from family violence.*

Lifeline – The moment someone answers

When everyone else is celebrating, someone might be struggling to get through the next few hours. For some, the pressure to feel happy and join in can make an already difficult time feel even harder. At Christmas, having someone to talk to can make all the difference. Lifeline is here to provide immediate support to anyone struggling or in distress – offering a listening ear, guidance and hope when it's needed most.

Need to talk? Lifeline provides free, confidential support. Call 0800 LIFELINE or text HELP.

35,530 calls were responded to by Lifeline.*

Family Works – The moment families need a little extra help

For some, Christmas is magical. But when bills keep coming and money is tight, the festive season can bring more pressure than joy. Sometimes, what matters most isn't the presents under the tree, but having the right support at the right time. From counselling and parenting support to practical assistance, Family Works helps families navigate challenges, strengthen relationships and create moments of joy.

A total of **4115** Family Works clients were supported through school-based programmes and other services.*

Enliven – The moment someone arrives

For older people and those living with disabilities, Christmas can feel especially isolating. Through Enliven, people can connect, make friends and enjoy activities that bring companionship and joy. Whether it's a Christmas celebration, a special outing or simply sharing a conversation and a laugh, Enliven helps make the festive season a little brighter.

Enliven supported **3254** clients to remain in their own homes and **458** clients took part in the Enliven Day Services.*

**Figures from our 2025/26 financial year.*

The need continues into 2027

As more people and families face difficult times, your support helps us be there for them – today, tomorrow and in the year ahead. This Christmas, you can help make more of these moments possible. Your gift can help someone find connection, receive support, reach safety or simply know that someone is there when they need them.

Please donate today at **psn.org.nz/donate**

Making space for every way of being:

Creating Spaces Where Every Child Belongs

Familyworks

Imagine walking into a room and everything feels a little too much. The lights are bright, the noises are overwhelming and the room is so busy that you're unsure where to look or what to do.

For some children, environments like this can be unsettling. Having somewhere quiet to retreat to, something to touch or move, or simply a little more time to settle can make all the difference.

Every child experiences the world in their own way. At Family Works, we celebrate these differences and find ways to help every child feel welcome, understood and included.



A giant, huggable friend

Somewhere to pause

One way Family Works is helping create more inclusive environments is through sensory rooms – calm spaces designed to help people feel comfortable, settled and ready to engage.

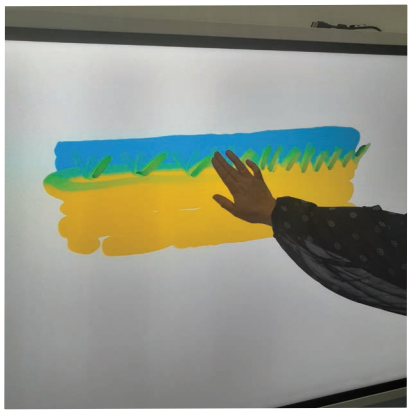
When the Tauranga Family Works team moved into its new premises last year, creating a sensory room was an important part of making the new space work for the children, young people and adults who use therapeutic services.

> *"A high number of clients who use our therapeutic services have experienced trauma in their lives. Along with this, we are seeing an increase in the number of clients who have a form of neurodiversity."*
>
> – A Family Works Team member

Designed with these needs in mind, the sensory room offers somewhere to pause, regulate and be at ease. Soft lighting, tactile resources, opportunities for movement and quiet spaces give children and adults different ways to engage with their surroundings. The room includes a bubble tower, an interactive screen, dimmable lighting, weighted blankets, and toy animals. For a person who finds noise, light or busy surroundings overwhelming, these aren't simply nice additions to a room – they provide a safe space to pause and find some calm.



A bubble tower



An interactive screen

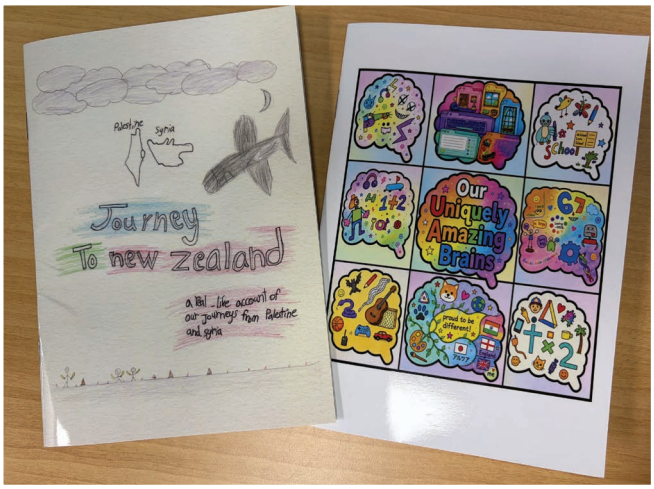
The team says sensory rooms can help reduce anxiety and stress, support emotional regulation and make it easier for children to focus during therapeutic sessions. Sometimes, creating a sense of safety doesn't require words, it starts with changing the space around someone.

Inclusion starts with understanding

Inclusion isn't only about the spaces we create. It's also about the stories and resources we make available.

For children and families navigating change, uncertainty or a new chapter in their lives, having books and resources that reflect who they are, where they come from, and the experiences that have shaped them can make a difference too. When children see themselves and their experiences reflected in the stories around them, it can be a powerful reminder that their experiences matter.

Wanting children to feel seen and heard, a Waitākere Social Worker in School (SWiS) invited children to share their own stories and bring them to life through illustrations. Their stories and creativity came together in two special children's books celebrating different cultures, experiences and ways of seeing the world.



The SWiS says that, for the children who helped create them, seeing their own stories and artwork brought to life gave them something to be proud of and a chance to have their voices heard.

> *"They are tools for children to educate others and take ownership and have power over their situations and to have some pride in their stories."*
>
> — A Waitākere SWiS

The books also have a wider purpose: helping other children learn about people whose backgrounds and experiences may be different from their own. Through these stories, children can discover different cultures, perspectives and ways of seeing the world, building empathy and a greater understanding of one another.

Because inclusion isn't about asking everyone to fit into the same space, it's about making space for every way of being.

Young changemakers shine bright

A big orange shout-out to the Mount Albert Grammar School Interact Committee for getting behind Shine and turning a simple idea into a meaningful way to make a difference.

During spring, students encouraged their school community to clear out their wardrobes and donate pre-loved clothing, which was then sold at a special after-school thrift event. With live music, a sausage sizzle and plenty of great finds, the event brought people together and raised funds for Shine's work supporting people and families affected by family violence.

We love seeing young people use their creativity, energy and community spirit to support a cause that matters.

Thank you to the Mount Albert Grammar School Interact Committee and everyone who participated in this initiative. We're so grateful for your support.





Get Involved

Inspired by this initiative? You can make a difference too. Start your own fundraiser for Shine and help create safer futures for people and families affected by family violence.

Find out more at 2shine.org.nz

Shine

Celebrating Te Marama o te Reo Māori

Presbyterian Support Northern

In September, PSN marked *Te Marama o te Reo Māori*, a month dedicated to learning, embracing and celebrating te reo Māori. It was a chance to learn together, build confidence and discover simple ways to bring more te reo Māori into our everyday lives. We also acknowledged *Te Wiki o te Reo Māori*, turning the celebration into an opportunity to put our learning into practice.

One of the themes we explored throughout the month was *Mana* – a kupu (term) that is often heard but can be difficult to capture in just one English word. Mana speaks to the dignity, strength, and sense of worth we each carry. It is also about the respect we show ourselves and others, and the connections that give us a sense of who we are and where we belong.

Across PSN, we explored te reo Māori through kīwaha (Māori sayings), whakataukī (proverbs), pepeha (a way of introducing yourself and sharing your connections to people and places), and shared kōrero (conversations) about what mana means to us.

These conversations and moments of learning reminded us that te reo Māori is more than words. It carries stories, identity and a sense of belonging and every new kupu we learn gives us another way to connect with the people and communities around us.

While *Te Marama o te Reo Māori* may have come to an end, our learning continues. As we head into summer and spend time with whānau, friends and our communities, we can carry a little more te reo Māori with us – one kupu and one kōrero at a time.

Kia kaha ki te kōrero, kia kaha ki te ako.

Be confident in speaking and keep learning.



Some moments stay with us long after they've passed

Across Enliven, Family Works, Shine and Lifeline, everyday acts of compassion and support can change lives. It might be someone finding a reassuring voice at Lifeline, or a daughter knowing her mum is receiving companionship and care through Enliven. It could be a family navigating life's challenges with the support of Family Works, or a woman and her children finding safety and hope through Shine.

For those receiving this care, these moments can be turning points: a reminder that they matter, and a reason to feel hopeful about what comes next. The opportunity to create that kind of difference can live on through the legacy we leave behind. A gift in your Will to PSN or one of its services can help carry this care forward for generations to come.

As we reflect on what matters most, perhaps it is also a time to think about the difference we can create for others in the years ahead.

Because some moments don't simply pass. They live on in the lives they touch.



If you'd like to learn more about leaving a gift in your Will, or simply have a confidential conversation, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact Vivienne Riddell on **09 520 8628** or **021 329 938**.

One conversation can make a difference:

The Ripple Effect of Reaching Out

Lifeline

A gentle note before you continue:
The content below includes references to suicide. If this may be difficult for you, please consider skipping it.

There are moments in life when finding the words feels impossible. When everything becomes overwhelming, reaching out can feel like the hardest thing to do. Yet sometimes, one conversation can create a small opening - a moment when someone feels heard, understood and a little less alone. We never know just how far that moment will travel.

For Sarah,* one call to Lifeline became a turning point in her life. Months later, it also helped her recognise when someone she loved was struggling and encourage that person to seek help. Her story captures something at the heart of Lifeline's work: that when one person finds the courage to speak, the impact can extend well beyond that single conversation.

Finding a way forward

A few years ago, Sarah reached a point where she felt completely hopeless. She felt alone, overwhelmed and unable to recognise her own worth. One night, when she was struggling to cope and thinking about ending her life, she called Lifeline.

"I don't even remember making the call clearly," Sarah says. *"I think it was one of those instinctive moments when your body acts before your mind has time to process what is happening."*

She is grateful that she made that call. *"It wasn't an easy journey, but that call was the first step towards my recovery. It became a turning point in my life, a moment that helped me begin to see my own worth and recognise the light I bring into this world."*

A few months later, Sarah's brother experienced depression. Having been through her own difficult experience, she recognised some of the signs and encouraged him to reach out to Lifeline. *"Seeing him in that position gave me a new perspective. I realised that so many people can find themselves in crisis, no matter who they are or where they are in life."*

For Sarah, her experience had changed the way she saw those around her. She understood how difficult it could be to ask for help, and she knew how important it was to make that first step feel possible.

"I know that one of the only reasons my brother is here is because of your service," she says. *"And for that I am eternally grateful."*

Sarah's story shows how far one moment of connection can reach. What begins with one person asking for support can create a ripple that touches the people around them too.



The conversation continues

Sarah now sees a counsellor regularly. *"For me, asking for help has become a normal and important part of looking after myself. It is something I am proud of, and something I wish I had felt more comfortable doing sooner."*

Her story reminds us that caring for our mental health includes recognising when things are becoming too much and asking for help.

**Name and details in this story have been changed to protect privacy.*

Lifeline counsellors are here if you need to talk. They provide safe, free and confidential support. Free call **0800 LIFELINE (0800 543 354)** or free text **HELP (4357)**. To learn more about Lifeline, please visit **lifeline.org.nz**.

A significant change for Enliven's home support services

For more than 20 years, Enliven has been there for people in their own homes, providing services that allow people to live safely, independently and well.

Our support workers, service coordinators (nurses) and office staff have become much more than the people who provide a service. They have become familiar faces and voices, trusted and reliable workers, and an important part of the lives of those they support.

It is therefore with great sadness that we share that Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora has decided not to renew the contracts for home-based support services with significant not-for-profit New Zealand organisations including Enliven, Visionwest and Lifewise in **Auckland, Counties Manukau, and Waitematā**.

Enliven, Visionwest and Lifewise currently support around **4,500 older and disabled people** across these regions, helping them live independently and with dignity in their own homes.

PSN Chief Executive Shaun Greaves says the decision is particularly difficult because of the relationships that have been built over so many years.

> *"PSN has delivered home-based support services through Enliven since 2002. We bring decades of experience, deep local knowledge and trusted relationships with the people and communities we serve."*

For us, this is much more than a contract coming to an end. It's about the people we have had the privilege of getting to know and care for.

It's the familiar knock at the door. The trust that has been built up between our staff and their clients where the most intimate of care is provided to allow our older people to stay in their own homes, surrounded by the things, people and community they love. Often our staff are the only people our older clients interact with from day to day. It's being there through good days and difficult ones and getting to know not just the person we support, but their whānau, their routines and the things that matter to them.

After so many years of caring for people, saying goodbye is difficult.



We're also thinking of the **320 Enliven staff** who have given so much of themselves to this work. Their compassion, dedication and commitment have made a real difference in the lives of thousands of people.

To everyone who has trusted Enliven to be part of your life, thank you. It has been a privilege to walk alongside you.

We know this change will be significant, and our priority is to care for our clients and staff through what comes next. We will keep them, along with you, our supporters, informed as we work through the transition from March 2027.

While this chapter is changing, our commitment to the people and communities we serve remains at the heart of everything we do.

Please note: This decision only affects Enliven's home-based support services in Auckland, Counties Manukau and Waitematā.

Our other Enliven services will continue as usual, including home-based support in the Waikato, Bay of Plenty and Lakes areas, ACC, disability and privately funded services in Auckland, Counties Manukau and Waitematā areas as well as our Day Services and Individualised Funding.

Enliven

Enliven provides at-home and community services that help older people and people living with disabilities remain independent, connected and living well.

For more information visit **enlivennorthern.org.nz**

Driven by care campaign:

Every journey powered by dignity, safety and support

Enliven

After more than a decade on the road and hundreds of thousands of kilometres, six of Enliven's vans have earned their retirement. They have carried Day Service attendees from their homes to the centres and back again, as well as taking them on countless outings and adventures.

Transport is the enabler that allows our older folk to connect with others in our Day Services. By providing transport for clients Monday to Fridays, the vans help make possible days filled with stimulating activities, shared lunches, friendships and engagement with the local community.

Van outings make this possible, whether it's fish and chips at the beach, taking a walk around a lake or joining a community singing group. They give older people opportunities to enjoy the day, share a laugh and make memories together.

PSN was able to secure funding for three of the new vans through generous bequests. To help fund the remaining three, we turned to the philanthropic community, and we are incredibly grateful for the response. A generous grant from The Glenice and John Gallagher Foundation made one of the vans for Enliven Day Services in Hamilton possible, while two further vans were funded through grants from Trusts who have chosen to give in private.

We're incredibly grateful to all these generous supporters for helping keep Enliven's people moving, connected and part of their communities.

Photos below capture the joyful ribbon-cutting ceremony at Te Ara Hou Village, attended by Sir John, Lady Glenice and Judi Gallagher, alongside proud Day Service attendees and staff.







Christmas Cards That Give Back

Looking for Christmas cards with a little more meaning?

Our first-ever PSN Christmas card collection features colourful, original artwork by tamariki supported through Family Works. Perfect for sending festive wishes to friends and whānau, thanking a teacher or brightening someone's day! Best of all, every purchase helps support PSN's work with people and families across our communities.

Make a difference this Christmas!

Order yours today at: **psn.org.nz/cards**



$20 PER PACK

2 packs for $35 | $6 NZ shipping

Each pack includes 10 assorted Christmas cards with envelopes.