



"Family Works' support has been life-changing for me."

Northern **NOTES**

WINTER 2015

FREEDOM FROM BULLYING

Riria fell apart when two of her young children were taken from her by her ex-partner and his family. She couldn't see her boys, aged 7 and 9, for six months.

"I felt like they had died. It was very traumatic."

Frantic for some support, Riria eventually stumbled upon Family Works. Her family worker listened and stood by her as she worked through the process of getting her children back.

Through counselling and the opportunity to meet other women affected by violence, Riria learnt to recognise the patterns of abuse in her relationships. Brought up in a violent home herself, she saw that she often tried to keep people happy, no matter how controlling they were.

"It revealed to me how I allowed myself to be bullied and abused. I was the weak link in the chain."

Riria's ex-partner yelled at her and insulted her in front of the children. He refused to attend family mediation or cooperate over parenting arrangements.

It took a long time for Riria to realise that such behaviour was not OK. Family Works gave her the strength to stand up to the bullying and reclaim her children.

Riria is now married to a supportive man she describes as the "strength and rock" of her blended family and she's determined to show her children a healthier, safer way to live – without violence.

"I've learnt that I do not deserve for anyone to exert power over me without my permission. You don't have to accept that kind of treatment from bullies, no matter who they are."

Your gifts have helped Riria and many more families like hers to get the social services support they need. We appreciate the way you trust us to extend a helping hand to those most vulnerable in your community.

LOVE IS... A SET OF COLOURED PENS

Stressed parents... tired and restless children. It's a familiar picture for Family Works Waitakere budgeter Linda Hamilton.

Some of the families she sees for budgeting advice have young children who need to be kept occupied while she spends time with Mum or Dad.

Linda does what she can with the meagre resources she has, but would love to be able to provide more art materials, a play mat, games, toys, books, puzzles and children's furniture.

In fact, most Family Works sites are short of fun and interactive resources for our children's counselling services. Your donation for this purpose would help us create a welcoming place where children can deal with the emotions they are experiencing.



MORE GROWS IN THE GARDEN THAN THE GARDENER SOWS



Hard at it: Mike and the two Bills start work on their plot.



Vegies and flowers are not the only things growing in the community garden plot next door to Enliven Carruth's Day Programme in Tauranga. Friendship, skills, and neighbourly pride are also flourishing in Plot 39.

Several day programme members have taken a keen interest in the allotment since it was built last year. It wasn't long before they were harvesting vegetables for the programme's midday meals and picking flowers to add colour to the tables. Scarecrows made by children from a local day care centre watch over their handiwork from a neighbouring plot.

Team leader Linda-Jane Rowell says the community garden brings people together and supports clients in

reaching some of their goals.

"It's great for the mind, body and spirit. They even get to take some produce home and are very proud of their efforts," she said.

The gardeners agree that working in the garden does them a power of good. "It's good to feel useful and see something for the effort put in," says Mike.

Are you interested in volunteering at Enliven's community programmes?

Please phone Suzanne Ward 09 520 8628 or email suzanne.ward@psn.org.nz.

ANGEL CAKE BAKE-OFF REMINDER

It's not too late to register for our Angel Cake Bake-Off this month. Join others who are raising funds for Family Works by baking and selling sweet treats. Register at www.fwn.org.nz/bake.

If you'd just like to make a donation instead, please fill out the enclosed form.

GOOD NEIGHBOURS

We're very grateful to a number of companies for lending their support to Family Works:

- Return to Sender Caskets and the Mt Roskill Collision Centre have signed on as Business Angels. Both are located near Family Works at the Leslie Centre.
- Whiteware company Magness

Benrow donated a second-hand fridge freezer to store food at the Onehunga Cooperating Parish for our Foodbank.

If your business or organisation is keen to support vulnerable people in your local community, we'd love to hear from you. **Contact Giselle Attard at 09 520 8632 or email giselle.attard@psn.org.nz**