



Presbyterian Support
Northern



THE PSN POST

SUMMER 2022/23

Season's Greetings!

From our board, staff and volunteers at PSN, we wish you blessings for the Christmas season and a safe and happy summer.

We were delighted with the response to our first edition of *The PSN Post* in September, and we hope you thoroughly enjoy this new summer edition.



Communities
Feeding
Communities
INITIATIVE

Kia Ora, my name is Grace and I am the Community Coordinator at our Communities Feeding Communities Initiative (CFCI). My role is all about building relationships with our Roskill South community, whānau and tamariki.

An important part of what we do at CFCI is exploring ways to provide access to fresh, nutritious kai and build caring relationships to give people a sense of belonging. I engage with other food hubs, spend time with people coming in for kai parcels and visit local kindergartens where I encourage children to plant seedlings and learn about growing food.

CFCI has several regular volunteers who help out in our kai space (food parcel area) and our community gardens. In fact, interest is growing with more and more local people helping out at our working bees.

Continued on next page...



L to R: Community Coordinator Grace Mua, Community Minister Fa'amanū Akeripa and Community Relations Manager Anne Overton.

We are connecting with the local community through our 'Welcome Wednesdays' communal lunches, providing community dinners, establishing a financial mentoring programme and hosting family volunteer days during the school holidays. I also regularly visit schools and engage with students.

I enjoy listening to people's stories and embracing their gifts. I treat my role as a real privilege, especially when it comes to helping and supporting our community to thrive.

One of the highlights for me was supporting a volunteer who was going through a difficult time. I was able to provide him with a safe and supportive space. He volunteered with us for four months while looking for a job. I helped him with his CV and gave him a reference to support his job applications. Eventually, he moved on to find a job that he loves, which is fantastic!

I believe building really good relationships, listening and having positive conversations are key to my mahi (work) – they help navigate what I do, and why.

I am excited to share some updates on what we have been working on this year so far:

- Victoria Hall has been relocated to our site and the layout plans for the interior have been finalised with the builders.
- Our backyard has had four allotment gardens installed.
- Children volunteered for us during the school holidays.
- We are working with local landscapers to develop our community garden.
- Community Minister Fa'amanū Akeripa has started hosting spiritual gatherings.

Victoria Hall

The relocation of Victoria Hall to our site was an exciting event for us at CFCI. The 129-year-old building was a long-standing part of Avondale's epicentre and holds significant history. It was purchased for £40 in 1897 through the contributions of around 90 Rosebank residents, keen to have a local venue for social as well as religious activity. It was originally sited in Eden Terrace and was transported by a team of horses to the corner of Orchard Street and Rosebank Road.

Planning for the building was led by Quakers, who wanted to offer interdenominational use of the hall. As a result, the Victoria Hall has been used by The Salvation Army, Seventh Day Adventists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Catholics, Anglicans and eventually a Union Parish Samoan congregation.

We are excited to be able to rescue and steward the building for the next phase of its life within a new community. The building has good bones and there is amazing potential to develop it into a wonderful, inspiring space for the local community.

The vision for Victoria Hall is to create a vibrant community space for local families. People will come into a welcoming, open space, an urban living room. This will be a space locals can enjoy a coffee and a chat.

There will be a commercial kitchen installed in the rear of the building, with double doors opening out onto a deck overlooking allotment gardens, a food forest and a nature play area.

Organisations and individuals can use the commercial kitchen, including people who are keen to start a food-related business, and need a helping hand to get going. We want to empower people on their journey and see our community thrive.

We need funding to get the commercial kitchen underway – can you help with a donation today?



Spring has sprung in the CFCI garden

Another big recent highlight at CFCI has been seeing our gardens start to grow. We have four allotment gardens planted with salad mix, beetroot, silverbeet, carrots and beans, with four more planned. We have already started harvesting some of the salad and beetroot; and a group of children helped harvest the crop to make salad for lunch. We were also able to provide 15 bags of salad mix for our pātaka kai (street pantry) and kai parcels.



Recently we have planted cranberries, blueberries, passionfruit and citrus in our micro food forest area. In addition, we have had numerous groups of children and adults preparing mulch for the food forest floor.

The gardens were open for children and families to volunteer during the October school holidays. One group of children had fun using cardboard to make a trail from the footpath to the garden – which became a fun activity running back and forth while laying the cardboard.

Work on the community garden at the front of our site got underway on 18 October, with a local landscaping company installing fencing, a pergola, garden beds and pathways.



We are so grateful for donors who help enable us to make a positive impact on our local community in many different ways. We look forward to sharing more exciting updates with you in due course.

If you can donate today to help our Communities Feeding Communities Initiative, please scan the QR code, or visit: www.psn.org.nz/donate.

Or maybe you have some spare time or gardening skills and could volunteer?

Please contact Grace Mua on **021 390 748** or email grace.mua@psn.org.nz



HOW BEQUESTS HELP

Including PSN in your Will is a way to offer future generations support.

It's also a personal way to make sure your values and beliefs live on to benefit others. Your gift will help create stronger communities and fund social services that make New Zealand the best place to raise children. Anyone can leave a bequest and whatever the size of your gift, it will make a positive difference.

Bequest income can be used in a variety of ways and is often used to fund larger projects, such as:

- Employment of a social worker to work across early childcare centres in West Auckland
- Upgrade of Lifeline technology systems, to enable counsellors to be able to take calls more promptly
- Pet refuge for those fleeing family violence
- Large van to transport Enliven clients to the Enliven day programmes and outings
- Building relocation and repurpose, for use in our Enliven day programmes
- Upgrade of security systems and staff safety at all our Family Works sites
- Employment of a Family Violence Prevention Advocate.

PSN would not be what it is today without the generous support from people like you.



If you'd like to discuss leaving a bequest or would like more information, please contact Vivienne Riddell (09) 520 8628 / 021 329 938 or by email vivienne.riddell@psn.org.nz.

Enquiries will be treated in confidence.

Did you know...

ONLY 50% OF NEW ZEALANDERS HAVE WILLS, AND ONLY 7.5% OF THOSE PEOPLE HAVE MADE A CHARITABLE LEGACY IN THEIR WILL.



Enliven workers provide support for older people and those living with disabilities or injuries. Clients enjoy a tailored programme that aligns with their individual needs, interests and goals so they can maintain their independence and enjoy fulfilling lives.

People of all backgrounds, cultures and religious beliefs receive care from our Enliven workers.

"She opened up and shared the reason for her hoarding tendency. Because she was lonely, she would buy things advertised on TV so that when they were delivered to her home she could talk to the delivery person – giving her connection and contact with someone."

Some examples of Enliven services are:

- Practical in-home support and personal care services to enable people to maintain their independence at home
- Day Services and social clubs for older people
- Respite and Day Service programmes for people living with dementia.



HOW ENLIVEN HELPED MRS M

Mrs M was referred to Enliven in 2018. She had been widowed in 1980, had no children and she had a myriad of complex, chronic health issues.

With no immediate family and only a couple of distant cousins with whom she rarely had contact, she struggled to manage everything alone and often felt lonely or isolated.

When Enliven staff began working with Mrs M, she faced some major challenges, especially with clutter in her house due to hoarding. All her bedrooms were so full she could barely walk into them. Her kitchen, dining room and lounge were also very crowded – with only a narrow walkway available. It was so bad, she slept on a divan in the lounge.

A DHB social worker had visited to offer her ideas on clearing some of the things, but Mrs M was not ready to face it.

However, since that initial visit, Mrs M has welcomed Enliven support workers into her home to help her organise the living spaces in a better way.

Mrs M was initially quite reluctant to speak much about her hoarding. Then, during one appointment just after Christmas, she spoke about missing the company and the meals

provided at the Enliven Day Service she had attended twice a week.

She said she hadn't seen anyone during this period other than her morning support worker and was excited the Day Service was resuming again the following week. She also opened up and shared that the motivation for her tendency to hoard was the social connection and contact she received from couriers coming to her door with her online shopping orders. She bought many items advertised on TV for that sole reason. This was a revelation and gave insight into how important social contact is for people and what lengths they will go to get it. Enliven Day Services for people like Mrs M are their lifelines.

Her health has declined with age, but she is adamant at this stage to remain in her home. To achieve this, Mrs M agreed to increase the support she receives from Enliven to twice a day. This gives her additional support and interaction at the end of the day and ensures she is well-prepared for the evening. It also provides an opportunity to check she has eaten and is safe and sound.

With her declining health, Mrs M has agreed that if she has a fall or is



unwell and Enliven support workers are present, she will allow them to call an ambulance to have her checked. If this happens, an Enliven Service Coordinator will be informed.

Enliven home support and community services enable people like Mrs M to remain living in their own homes, stay healthy and engage socially with others.

If you would like to contribute and be part of this positive impact, please scan the QR code, use the response slip enclosed, or donate online at www.psn.org.nz/donate

You can make a positive impact on someone's quality of life today!



Family Start programme makes a vital impact to young families through their support

Family Works Northern provides a range of services to New Zealanders in need. We would love to take the opportunity in this section of our *PSN Post* to share a little more detail about one of the Family Works programmes making an important difference in our community.

We shared this story digitally with some of our donors earlier in the year but wanted to distribute it more widely, so we are pleased to include it in this edition of *The PSN Post*.

GIVING YOUNG ONES THE BEST START TO LIFE

We were fortunate to spend some time talking with Robyn and Delia – two very inspiring and compassionate team members from our Family Works Northern Waitākere office. They are two of our longest-standing social workers for the Family Start programme, which provides a critical service to whānau in our communities.

Pictured below: Robyn (Left) and Delia (Right)



What is Family Start?

Family Start is an intensive home-visiting programme that specifically supports families and whānau who are struggling with challenges or problems that put the health, education, or wellbeing of a new baby or young child at risk.

The programme has a strong focus on improving children's growth, health, safety, home environment, learning, and relationships. Visits can start in the early stages of pregnancy (from three months) and referrals are taken until a baby is one year old. Family Start will usually provide support up to when a child turns three, but in some complex situations may continue on until a child is school aged.

Key to the success of the programme is the trusting relationships that develop between the Family Works Social Worker and the child's whanau. This occurs from the continuity of support and home visiting over time building trust so that the whanau know that Family Works is there to help and support their child to achieve their full potential.

What does a Family Start social worker do in their day-to-day role?

We learnt from Robyn and Delia that all Family Start staff are qualified social workers with a broad wealth of experience that helps them manage the challenges accompanying the complex family dynamics and situations they face daily.

“Things are happening all the time... We are always thinking about what the families need, and then going out to source things like food parcels from the food bank, parenting resources, toys, books, warm clothing, and blankets.” – Robyn

“In our day-to-day work, we visit families in their homes – some days we see up to four households. The visits start with once a week, and we spend time getting to know the parent, their child, their partner and any family or whānau.

We figure out how they are managing as a parent to see what they have already got sorted and what areas of parenting they may need help with.

Part of what we do is get them access to the right healthcare and connect them with other services they might need to utilise (e.g. WINZ, budgeting advice, food bank).

To help the parents keep their baby or child safe, we provide support and advice by teaching how their child is growing and changing, and showing them how they can support their child's development at different ages and stages.

We can help them figure out what they want to achieve (if they have any goals), and we chat about how they want to change or improve. Once we've done this, we create a plan together to help make it happen. Along the way, we contribute with lots of advice and ideas to aid them in solving problems and making progress towards achieving their goals.” – Delia

What do you find most rewarding about the work you do?

Robyn shared that sometimes the seemingly small successes are also massive milestones – such as earning the trust of a child or a particularly difficult person. She explained that sometimes it can be a big challenge to gain trust with clients, their children and whānau. Over the years, she has worked hard to refine her communication skills so that she can break down the trust barrier much faster:

“I get 30 seconds, as soon as they open that door... If I can get that wall down really quickly with the right impression, then I can get inside and begin working with the family. As soon as I’m inside I will find anything I can to connect with them, to help build up the trust between us.”

Delia expressed that the most rewarding part of her role is when she sees success and positive change in a family - when all the time, care, effort and energy spent with them truly starts paying off:

“I think the most rewarding thing for me is when you see success in a family, and you see all the changes and how they’ve improved their life. It’s a light that goes on in their head... and then – ‘click’ – we see them come to a realisation that they really want to change their lives and their ways.”

What are some of the challenges you face in your role?

Often Family Works Northern social workers are trying to help people in some very difficult situations. In many cases there are challenges like mental health issues, addictions or substance abuse, family violence, homelessness, gambling problems, or gang affiliation.

Other challenges might include a family where a child has a disability or needs special care, victims of physical or sexual abuse, young parents who need some extra support, or the family has been involved with Oranga Tamariki.

As this can be a lot to manage and process, Robyn and Delia work closely with their manager and frequently collaborate with their wider team. They expressed how grateful they are for such a strong support system and pointed out that it has played a large part in why they have both stayed with Family Works Northern for nine years.

What did PSN notice?

When interviewing Robyn and Delia, it didn’t take long to recognise that they are special people who are immensely dedicated to their work and make an incredibly positive impact on those in need.

Support from our caring donors enables us to continue doing important work like this within our communities.

We are so grateful for the care of kind New Zealanders who have directly helped children and families have a better life.



Will you consider making a gift today to make an impact?

Your donation will allow staff like Robyn and Delia to continue to support families and whānau. Please donate by scanning the QR code or by visiting:

www.psn.org.nz/donate



SCAN ME

If you’d like to speak to someone to make a donation, please contact our fundraising team – (09) 520 8608.

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