



# THE PSN POST

AUTUMN 2023

## *Easter Greetings!*

We hope this Autumn edition of *The PSN Post* finds you safe and well.

Easter marks a significant time in our calendar, and this season we are glad to bring you stories of hope that have been made possible thanks to caring people like you, the dedication of the PSN team, and our wonderful communities. Our thoughts go out to those affected by the terrible weather experienced in Aotearoa recently. In this issue you can read how our teams across all Presbyterian Support Northern services are supporting those in need of support at this challenging time.

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW CEO BONNIE ROBINSON

We're excited to announce that **Bonnie Robinson** has been appointed as the new **Chief Executive (Kaiwhakahaere Mātua)** of Presbyterian Support Northern (PSN) by the Board of PSN.



Starting her role at the end of January 2023, Bonnie comes to us after recently serving as CEO of HBH Senior Living (formally called Howick Baptist Healthcare) since 2012.

Bonnie's career spans over 20 years in social service organizations, including two years with PSN, Age Concern, Alzheimers Auckland, and the Ministry of Social Development.

In addition to her management experience, she has served on a range of boards and is currently President of the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services.

Bonnie brings the experience, values, and personal qualities required to lead our organisation through the next phase of fulfilling our mission and mahi: *to enable positive change in our communities.*

Bonnie has a husband, Brett, who is a prison chaplain, and two adult children.

Please join us in welcoming Bonnie. Future PSN Posts will include regular updates from Bonnie.

## ABOUT US

Presbyterian Support Northern provides clients with a unique combination of social services through our well-regarded brands of Family Works, Lifeline and Shine. We also have a long history of supporting those who are ageing or have a health and disability issue to live their best lives through our Enliven services.

Around 890 PSN staff deliver our much valued services from 25 sites throughout the upper North Island from Taupō to Whangārei.

As a large charitable service provider and faith-based organisation with a proud 135-year heritage, we have a strong sense of social mission, and facilitate innovative, community-level initiatives at the grassroots.

We also provide fee-for-service programmes, including Lifeline Connect and Shine Family Violence Education Services (Shine RESPOND and DVFREE), that provide external training and consultancy to corporate and community organisations.

We offer compassionate support to anyone whose life has been impacted by harm, distress, loneliness or instability.



## STORM AFTERMATH

After the recent episodes of wild weather and unprecedented heavy rains, our Family Works site in Avondale was badly flooded, with staff now having to work elsewhere for a while. During this challenging, stressful time, our Communities Feeding Communities Initiative also provided extra emergency food parcels to the local community.



Any additional support to help people during this time of recovery will be greatly appreciated. If you can help - please scan the QR code or visit [www.psn.org.nz/donate](http://www.psn.org.nz/donate)



## WHY SHOULD I CONSIDER A BEQUEST TO PSN?

Leaving a bequest in your Will is an incredible way of showing you care for your community and the people who live in it – not just now but into the future.

A bequest could be the gift with the most impact that you will ever give. Imagine the difference your kindness could make to the lives of people in need.

We acknowledge and thank the generous donors who have already chosen to leave a gift to PSN in their Wills.



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](mailto:vivienne.riddell@psn.org.nz).

*Enquiries will be treated in confidence.*

*"You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God."*

2 Corinthians 9:11-13



## DID YOU KNOW...

As we are an approved charitable organisation, you can claim back 33.33 cents for every dollar you have donated to us in the last financial year?



You could consider then re-donating this refund, to make an even greater difference to the lives of others.

For more information, please visit:

[www.ird.govt.nz/donations](http://www.ird.govt.nz/donations)



## TOP-NOTCH SUPPORT PROVIDED BY ENLIVEN

**It is a pleasure to share stories about how our Enliven service enables the elderly and disabled to continue living in their homes thanks to our in-home support and personal care services.**

Our Enliven team has a new Response and Quality initiative specially designed to ensure the best-quality service is provided by our staff.

The need for this arose when the workload of our Enliven service coordinators became too much. As a result, it was difficult for them to quickly respond to support workers in need of additional clinical help or advice while working with clients.

The Response and Quality team was set up to alleviate this – with one support role based in Auckland and one in the Bay of Plenty.

Enliven support workers now have access to additional phone support whenever required. This includes consistent and timely responses to things like urgent queries, adverse events, client incidents or accidents, changes in clients' health conditions, and complaints or concerns.

The Response and Quality roles also help to lift overall consistency and clinical standards by removing additional pressure from Enliven support coordinators, allowing them to focus on their core tasks without interruption.

In addition, the Response and Quality roles increased team efficiency by assisting Enliven area managers with certain activities that raise the quality of our service. Some examples are: triage referrals, identifying trends, auditing, collating and reporting on data, correspondence with Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand and other health services, and making recommendations of actions from various events and reporting.

The introduction of this team has proven invaluable and is likely to double in size very soon.

*"I just want to say that the service you provide is always very prompt and you check in on people and situations quickly. I really like how you give feedback and offer alternative options when situations arise, and also give praise for when initiative is shown. I feel like I'm able to flick you a call and know I'll get help whenever I need it.*

*You guys do a great job!"*

**– Enliven support worker**



Our PSN Vision is *A Better Life for Everyone*. With the implementation of the Response and Quality team, PSN has been able to live up to this motto by alleviating undue pressure on staff and by improving our quality of service as well. This ultimately enables us to provide top-notch care to our clients.

You can contribute and be part of the positive impact Enliven is making - please scan the QR code, or donate online at:

[www.psn.org.nz/donate](http://www.psn.org.nz/donate)



**Thank you for your positive impact on the lives of others!**

# SOWING SEEDS FOR THE FUTURE

Our Communities Feeding Communities (CFC) team has been busy engaging with the local Roskill South community.



Communities Feeding Communities encourages locals to access food in a variety of ways. This mixed model supports the local community, including schools and other organisations. It also creates conversations that help people in our community become more empowered and connected.

We have a kai space that is about more than just giving out emergency food parcels. We have a pātaka kai, a community garden, allotment gardens, and a micro-food forest which gives the local community access to nutritious, healthy food.



*Amy Khyriem, Kai Transitioner*

Another unique aspect of CFC is our kai transitioner, Amy Khyriem. Amy spends time regularly talking and listening to locals to find out how we can better support them. Many are struggling with unemployment and the high cost of living – they often need a food parcel to help feed their families.

We expect demand for CFC to grow throughout 2023 as news of our work and purpose is shared with the wider community.

We are also working hard to support those 'invisible families' who struggle to ask for help.

The development of community gardens is central to CFC and provides a positive way for us to engage with locals. We use our gardens as a tool to teach the community how to grow their own vegetables and fruit.

One of our new volunteers, Arruna, is a recent immigrant to New Zealand. She often brings her children, who love our child-friendly space. They're so excited that they wake her early on the day she volunteers. They can't wait to get to our community space and play in the garden. Arruna's family has a real sense of belonging and know that people care about them.



*Community Coordinator Grace Mua with Green MP Ricardo Menendez March*



*Progress in the garden*



*Community volunteers gathering fresh produce*

## DONATE TODAY

Donations from people like you make this significant community work possible. We really need your support to keep the wonderful work at CFC going.



You can contribute by visiting [www.psn.org.nz/donate](http://www.psn.org.nz/donate) or by scanning this QR code



*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](mailto:grace.mua@psn.org.nz)



*Community Relations Manager Anne Overton planting vegetables with local children*

# THE YEAR IN REVIEW

**1479** food parcels provided to families.



women and children stayed in Shine refuges over the last financial year.



**315,366**

text messages sent and received by Lifeline.

119,047 calls received by Lifeline.



**3292**

Enliven clients were supported to remain in their own homes.



**1264**

Family Works clients were supported through school-based interventions.

**3131**

Family Works clients were supported through other interventions.

**664**

Family Works clients were supported to be safe from family violence.



**LIFELINE**  
AOTEAROA

## GIVING HOPE AND SAVING LIVES

Lifeline has proudly supported New Zealanders for over 58 years and has been part of PSN since 2016. We receive up to 10,000 calls a month and even more text messages. On average we support 15 to 20 people at high risk of suicide every day.

Despite this important work, Lifeline receives no government funding. Instead, we rely on generous Kiwis who share our vision to help New Zealanders at times of distress and crisis.

**“I think if it wasn't for Lifeline I wouldn't be here.”**

*– Text sent by former client*

Lifeline works to ensure that there is someone to turn to – someone who will listen when a person is in distress. We currently have around 72 helpline counsellors and 110 trained volunteers answering phones and responding to texts from stressed people.

Counsellors undergo in-depth training and supervision, providing a caring and professional service to a wide range of people in need.

Callers range from a schoolboy on a bus dreading his first day at a new school to a grandmother feeling desperately low and lonely. Lifeline counsellors help New Zealanders with many issues including emotional and psychological distress, anxiety, depression, relationship and family problems, domestic abuse, work and financial concerns, and a myriad of others. The overall goal is to reduce personal distress, enable positive change, and save lives.



## Every 4.8 minutes someone calls Lifeline for help.

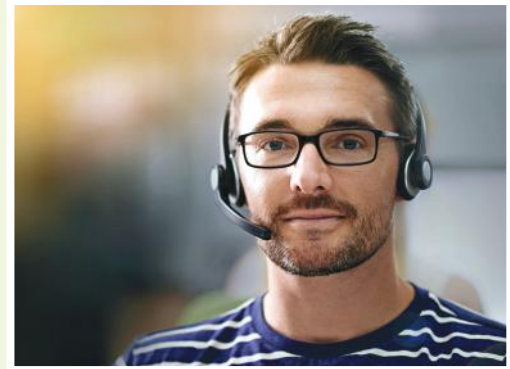
Here's a recent example of how one meaningful conversation helped change the life of a fellow Kiwi during a dark moment...

*"I had known about this service for a long time, but had always been apprehensive about calling as there are generally much more urgent cases that need attention. Last night I called as I was in one of the worst situations I'd found myself in.*

*Pat picked up my call and was everything I needed in that moment. He spoke very calmly and it just felt like he understood what I was feeling, and he also helped organise someone to come and check on me in person.*

*Pat really helped me through this situation and I just wanted him to know that I'm OK and committed to my counselling appointment this weekend. You have a legend on your hands with Pat and I just wanted to say a massive thank you to him and the team.*

*[Lifeline is a] very professional and caring service. [It was my] first time using the service, [and] hopefully the last time I'll need it, but, yeah, big ups to the work you guys are doing. It's tough work but you are amazing!"*



Supporters fund every single call and text. *Lifeline is not government funded.*

### DONATE TODAY



Contributions from donors mean Kiwis can access safe, confidential, free support when they need it.

We are grateful for the amazing people who stand alongside Lifeline counsellors and provide vital, life-changing support.

The hundreds of thousands of Kiwis who use the service are so grateful.

**We need you to be a part of helping Lifeline support New Zealanders in distress. Please use the QR code here:**



"A lot of people think that Lifeline is government funded, we are not, we do the best that we can as a charity and we know how much of an impact we have, but **we need continued support** to do so."

Learn more at:

[www.lifeline.org.nz](http://www.lifeline.org.nz)

24/7 Helpline:

0800 LIFELINE (543 354)



## SEEKING IDEAS

We would love to hear from you if you have feedback or ideas on future content you would like to see in upcoming editions of *The PSN Post*. Please email [tim.pannabecker@psn.org.nz](mailto:tim.pannabecker@psn.org.nz) or give us a call – (09) 520 8608. If you'd like to speak to someone to make a donation, please contact our fundraising team on the number mentioned above.

# SHINE STANDS FOR SAFER HOMES IN NEW ZEALAND EVERY DAY

shine\*

New Zealand's level of family violence is an ongoing problem that needs to be addressed so that people can get free, get safe, heal, and learn not to use violence.

Shine's team is here to step in and help women, children and men get out of the cycle of family violence. We offer them the opportunity for a happier, healthier and safer future. Shine has been keeping New Zealanders safe for more than 30 years, and has been part of PSN since 2016.

## We are facing some alarming abuse statistics:

- Every three minutes, police attend a family harm call-out, and shockingly – it is estimated that 76% of incidents are not even reported.
- Half of all homicides in New Zealand are family violence related.
- A child is killed by a family member in New Zealand every 5.5 weeks.
- Over 90,000 children are exposed to family violence in New Zealand every year.

Statistics like these can seem overwhelming and the challenges insurmountable. But they are not. At Shine, we believe there is cause for hope.

Every year we help thousands of people through our refuge centres, helpline and our KIDshine child safety programme. Our Shine advocates continuously provide support and advice to people impacted by family violence.

We also help people who use violence to stop doing so through our non-violence programmes.

We train police, social workers, and people in hospitals, workplaces and schools to respond effectively. And we work to shift the attitudes and laws in our society that allow family violence to continue.

**This vital work could not happen without the help of kind donors – their support makes a significant impact to many people in dire need of help.**

## Steph's Story

Steph\* was one of those people impacted by family violence – and Shine helped her find a way out to a life of hope.

Steph had no idea when she met her partner at university that the man she loved would become a violent person she no longer knew or recognised.

Her life was turned upside down without warning. She describes their early relationship as typical. But then she fell pregnant with their first child and life became a roller coaster. They moved to New Zealand to be closer to his family, who all insisted they get married. But soon afterwards, he became very controlling.

Early in their marriage, he accused her of cheating on him. When she denied it, he 'lost the plot' and punched her in the head.

"Often what should have been normal conversations between us would suddenly turn into an attack," Steph says.

Shine was able to give Steph the essential support she needed. She arrived at a Shine refuge just days before giving birth to her third child. Our refuge staff immediately supported her to make a birthing plan, provided baby clothes, and bedding – everything Steph needed for her new baby and her other two children.



They also helped her formulate a safety plan for herself and her children. Soon afterwards, we helped Steph access counselling which helped her with a protection plan for her kids – who also received counselling through KIDshine.

Steph stayed at our Shine refuge with her children for four months. When she left, she entered a transitional house that her Shine advocate had organised, and then our team also helped her find permanent accommodation.

She then began to dream again... of standing on her own two feet and starting a business, and her advocate and the refuge staff were able to help her begin implementing ways to make that happen.

Our vision continues – because the need is still there. We require support now more than ever, so please donate today to help bring our crucial services to families who really need us. Your gift will bring hope to many.

**DONATE TODAY**

Please scan the QR code here, or visit: [www.psn.org.nz/donate](http://www.psn.org.nz/donate).



For more information on what Shine does, visit: [www.zshine.org.nz](http://www.zshine.org.nz).

**If you or someone you know is affected by family violence, call Shine's helpline for advice and information on 0508 744 633 – open daily, 24 hours a day. It's a free and confidential service.**

# HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE HEAL AND THRIVE

Having witnessed family violence from a young age, nine-year-old Harley\* developed a tendency to be impulsive, aggressive and destructive. At school, she had trouble focusing and struggled to maintain friendships. Harley became increasingly difficult and would often run away and hide when approached about her behaviour.

With both parents in prison, she was placed in the long-term care of her grandmother, Maria\*, who did her best. Unfortunately, Maria battled several chronic health issues and struggled to maintain the energy and focus to provide adequate care for her granddaughter.

Sometimes Harley would leave the house at night unsupervised, which put her safety in danger and brought additional stress and worry for her grandmother.

Harley regularly put herself and others at risk, showing a definite 'flight or fight' trauma reaction to the family violence she had experienced. She was at risk of going into the care system and being permanently excluded from school.

Her school reached out to request help through the Social Workers in Schools (SWiS) programme - and that's where Harley's journey to becoming more stable and settled began.

The overall goal was to help Harley to remain in school and to give her life tools to cope. This would enable her to deal with things better and move forward from past trauma.

Harley agreed to participate in weekly counselling sessions and to try various strategies.

Our SWiS worker and a Learning Aid support person worked to build relationships with her. They became her two safe support people. She was able to visit either one of them

whenever she was feeling troubled, threatened, or anxious at school.

Harley's behaviour stemmed from her battle with triggers from past abusive incidents that deeply impacted her. It became clear that she had experienced eight adverse experiences, including serious abuse, emotional neglect, family dysfunction, severe mental health issues within the family, and incarcerated parents.

Harley got off to quite a nervous start with her counsellor due to her experience with adults in her life, especially how they had hurt her and had dramatically broken her trust. Gradually, the two of her support people built a good rapport with her and Harley began to engage well with the counselling activities.

Our counsellor worked with Harley for more than five months and used an approach that acknowledged her trauma but focused strongly on her wellbeing. A key objective was to develop an ability to self-regulate her behaviour and reactions and to help her to understand what was an actual or perceived threat.

Harley was given strategies for making and maintaining friendships. Our counsellor also helped her foster a better sense of belonging as she continued adjusting to being in the care of her grandmother. We helped Harley make sense of her life, especially the changes in her home and family.

In addition, our SWiS worker was able to give Harley's grandmother, Maria, some assistance coordinating access to healthcare through Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand. Her energy levels returned and she was better able to support her granddaughter's needs. Maria agreed to stay in touch with our SWiS team regarding her health needs. She worked cooperatively to



provide, nurture and care for Harley as she progressed on her journey.

Maria's health was monitored consistently. Transport was provided so she could access health services and attend appointments. This enabled her to feel much stronger and better equipped to manage Harley's behaviours and support her as she went through the counselling process.

Harley's journey was not altogether linear and sometimes it was a case of two steps forward, one backward – but she developed healthy relationships with her counsellors. She started directing her concerns towards them, rather than 'acting out' her feelings at school or home.

Harley began using one of the new strategies she had been taught and found that it brought her praise from others and raised her self-esteem. This was significant as it prompted her to use other strategies she'd learnt through the counselling.

Her school acknowledged Harley's progress and resisted expelling her when there was a minor setback partway through the counselling process.

She is now better integrated into school and home life and feels a much stronger sense of belonging. She is more settled and better able to manage her reactions. Her focus in school has improved substantially and she is finding it much easier to maintain friendships.

*\* Names have been changed to protect identity.*

**Our sincere thanks for the Family Works SWiS team for providing a valuable insight into the work they do with some of our most vulnerable community members.**

Kind New Zealanders help PSN provide amazing support for Kiwis in need. Thank you to all those who have generously donated to what we do.

If you would like to contribute so we can help more young people like Harley, please scan the QR code here, or visit:

[www.psn.org.nz/donate](http://www.psn.org.nz/donate)

