

"Family Works was willing to listen and give help."

Desiree (right) now has a house for her family, thanks to Darrin Meynell and Jules Hansen from Family Works.

Northern NOTES

AUTUMN 2015

FAMILY WORKS TURNS HOMELESSNESS INTO HOPE

Hamilton mum, Desiree Beazley, had to live in her car after her rental house burnt down. She spent weeks without a home while five of her children lived with family and friends and they waited for Housing New Zealand accommodation to become available.

That's when Family Works became involved through a school social worker. We found emergency housing for Desiree and supported her application to Housing New Zealand for another home. Eventually the family moved to a large house in another suburb, but Desiree still faces some struggles, such as the cost of transporting her children across the city every day to the schools where two of them have special teachers.

Affordable, suitable housing is a major issue for many of the families who come to Family Works. Add poverty, health issues and unemployment into the mix and life becomes a tough struggle. Community support, backed by generous people like you, can make all the difference.

The fire forced Desiree to move from the suburb she'd lived in for 15 years. People from the neighbourhood rallied around with donations of furniture, white ware and clothing, and Family Works' advocacy and support was a lifesaver. "Family Works was willing to listen and give help. They weren't judgmental. I'm very grateful for that," she said.

We see many stories like Desiree's. With your help, we look forward to supporting many more families like hers.



Presbyterian Support
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THANK YOU FOR SHOWING THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

Your generous help brought a smile to children and families over Christmas and the holiday period.

Thanks to you and many others, more than \$20,000 was raised during December and January, helping us bridge the gap between the services we are funded for and the needs of stressed and struggling families. We're delighted at the difference this makes to our ability to provide social services for families during a difficult time of year.

In addition, we were able to give more children than ever something special for Christmas. Almost 1,000 children were surprised and delighted to receive a gift, often their only Christmas present, kindly delivered by Family Works social workers and counsellors. We're especially grateful to students from St Cuthbert's College, Greenlane Presbyterian Church, The Warehouse Manukau, Variety – The Children's Charity and generous individuals like you who either went shopping themselves or gave us money to provide gifts where there were gaps.

One mum said that her boys had never had a wrapped Christmas gift before and she became teary when she was given the gifts for her sons.

The Family Works presents were the only gifts another family received and by January, they'd become the children's most treasured toys.

A family worker told us this story: "One mum got herself in debt and told me that this Christmas time would be a little sad as there was nothing underneath the tree. When she saw me with beautiful gifts she could not believe this was happening! She was so excited and grateful for all this support and empathy around Christmas and had tears in her eyes."

This Easter, with your help, we will continue in the spirit of Christmas so that many more families can enjoy a new beginning, experiencing the love and care that will help them flourish.

SINGER-SONGWRITER RAISES FUNDS FOR FAMILIES



We were delighted to partner with singer-songwriter Malcolm Gordon who wrote the song *Hey Neighbour* to help us put the spotlight on family violence. Malcolm donated \$5 from each sale of his album *The Cobbler's Grandson* to Family Works and recently presented us with a cheque for \$1,375.

Malcolm Gordon (right) presents the 'cheque' he and his young son created to Acting CEO Simon Bilton.

"It's been one of the biggest privileges of my career as a musician to work on this appeal alongside Family Works," he said.

Are you a fundraiser at heart with a good idea? You're welcome to tell us your ideas any time! Every fundraising idea turned into reality is a step closer to making New Zealand the best place to raise children.

"WE'RE SO PROUD OF YOU..."



As a proud parent, grandparent or caregiver, you probably have a place in your home where you display your children's achievements – the gold star chart, the painting from kindy, or the certificate from school.

To coincide with Children's Day, we've created an online noticeboard where everyone can celebrate children – a community pin board where we say "well done". The forum will also explain some of the needs of

the children we work with and the impact Family Works has on their lives.

Many of New Zealand's most vulnerable children don't receive this kind of encouragement. They have to survive without the love and attention that would help them truly flourish.

Check it out at www.welldone.org.nz. Post your own proud moment and learn more about how you can help us encourage the children who need it most.

SUPPORT FOR YOUNG FAMILIES IN HUNTLY

Young families in Huntly will now benefit from extra social support alongside health care for their babies and toddlers.

Amanda Barron has been appointed to work with Plunket nurses and health workers in a partnership designed to help vulnerable families flourish. While the Plunket nurses focus on health care, Amanda provides extra support for housing issues, benefits, budgeting or early childhood education.

The Huntly pilot follows the success of a similar scheme in East Auckland and Wiri. One family there was very grateful for the support they received after the birth of their sixth child. "It gave me peace and took a big hard rock from off my back," the mother said.

We are so grateful for the many supporters who have made this service possible, including the D.V. Bryant Trust Board, Tindall Foundation, Trust Waikato, WEL Energy Trust, Walker & Hall, and a bequest from the estate of Henry Charles Fawcett.

Leaving a legacy in your will is another way you can help future generations of Kiwis through new initiatives like this.

Contact Suzanne Ward, our Bequest Coordinator, on 09 520 8628 to find out how easy it is to leave a gift in your will.



CALLING ALL BAKERS...



Join the
Angel Cake
Bake Off

A cake and a cuppa – a small way to contribute to keeping children safe

Fire up the oven and put on your pinny – we're keen to see those baking and icing skills in action for our Angel Cake Bake-off in June. Other edibles are welcome besides cake. It could be muffins, slices, pancakes – anything with a sweet, angelic theme.

We're asking you, along with your school, church, youth group, or business colleagues to run your own bake-off to raise funds for Family Works and draw attention to the need to protect children from family violence through our 'Guardian Angel' campaign.

Be an angel – register your interest now at www.fwn.org.nz/bake and start getting organised to whip up those sweet treats!

EASING THE PAIN OF SEPARATION FOR CHILDREN



Our Family Dispute Resolution Service is making an impact in your community, nearly a year after it was first launched.

Well over 1,000 separated or separating mums and dads have now contacted the service for the support they need to achieve the best outcomes for their children. A number of grandparents, aunts, uncles and other family members have also sought help to create parenting plans or update caregiving arrangements. Like all our Family Works services, family dispute resolution focuses on what's best for the children. The service includes a Parenting through Separation course, coaching in preparation

for mediation, and sessions with a trained mediator.

Manager Timothy McMichael says interest in the service is a result of Family Works' positive reputation in local communities. Changes to the overall service soon to be announced by the Ministry of Justice will make it even more readily available to vulnerable people who need support.

"This is very good news for everyone – Mums, Dads, children and also for our Family Dispute Resolution service," Timothy said.

To contact the service, phone 0800 737 6583 or visit www.resolution.org.nz.

"MR COMPETITIVE" STILL GOING STRONG AT 98

At 98 years old, Ron Andrews can still whack a golf ball a good 100 metres or so. He also likes to take on his mates at bowls and snooker at Enliven's new Conversation Café in Taupo where he's known as "Mr Competitive".

Mr Andrews lives on his own after his wife passed away a few years ago. A team of Enliven home-care support workers visits him every day. One of them, Merv Richdale, often takes him on outings at the weekend; a favourite spot is the hole in one golf tee on the shores of Lake Taupo.

"The Conversation Café and getting clients out of their home on outings is such a joy for them. Ron just loves his Thursday and Saturday outings," says Merv.

Merv also helped him put together a small booklet of his wartime memories. Mr Andrews volunteered for the airforce when World War II broke out and took part in the Battle of Britain as a fighter pilot. After the war, he managed second-hand stores in Palmerston North, where he and his wife raised four children.



Hole in one? Anything's possible for 98-year-old Ron Andrews

Need extra help in the home for yourself or someone else?
See www.northern.enliven.org.nz for details.



Lost the spark that makes life enjoyable? We can all do with a boost now and then. Our Enliven support staff help maximise the independence of those who face the everyday challenges of ageing, disability or injury. They've come up with some bright ideas on how to make the most of life. Here's a selection:

"Visit the gardens and smell the roses."

"Jumping for joy is great exercise."

"Create a gratitude day – leave a note or do something to make someone smile."

"Cherish the little pleasures in life."

"Be interested in where a person comes from, and their history."

For a free *Enliven Yourself* poster, contact Ashley Narayan on 09 520 8620 and if you or a relative needs help managing the challenges of everyday life, contact Enliven Maximising Independence services at www.northern.enliven.org.nz.

To donate, please use your personalised response slip,
or send your gift to Presbyterian Support Northern, PO Box 99890, Newmarket, Auckland 1149.
Alternatively visit www.psn.org.nz to donate online by credit card