

PEOPLE

Helping People

The magazine of Presbyterian Support Upper South Island

ISSUE 4

Winter 2018



On the cover:

I'll meet you at
the Trash Lab!

- Emotion coaching helps kids, strengthens families
- Let's celebrate Matariki together
- Meet some amazing Enliven volunteers
- Vulnerable young people find success

Presbyterian Support (Upper South Island) is a non-profit social services organisation serving the West Coast, Mid-Canterbury, Christchurch, North Canterbury, Marlborough, and Nelson.

Through our service groups Family Works and Enliven we support children, young people, families, whānau and older people to become safe, strong, and connected.

To learn more or to find a service centre, go to www.psupsouth.org.nz.



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Our services



A Time for Connection



A message from Presbyterian Support Upper South Island Chief Executive, Vaughan Milner.

Ways to tackle the poverty of relationships or social poverty are the theme of this edition of People Helping People. In this era of electronic communication and technology it's easy to overlook how important respectful and caring personal contacts are for wellbeing. People helping and connecting with others is the essence of community. Whiria ki te tangata - weave the people together.

Vaughan Milner



A Karakia for Matariki

Matariki te tipua
Matariki te tawhito
Tau mai te wairua

Mai ngā ira atua
Ki te ira tangata
Tihei mauriora!

Matariki the sacred
Matariki the old
Welcome the spirit

Welcome the life force
From the essence of Atua
To us of the human kind

Let there be life!



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Matariki

Aotearoa's Very Own Celebration

Chicks and baby bunnies in autumn? Pumpkins in spring? Snowflake decorations and big roast turkeys on a hot summer's day? **How fortunate we are that in the long, cold and dark months of winter we have Matariki, the Māori new year.**

In Aotearoa we can celebrate together our very own tradition of thankfulness, connecting with family and whānau, remembering loved ones, telling stories, sharing delicious seasonal kai, and preparing for the year ahead.

Matariki is rich with tradition. This year it officially begins on **15 June 2018**.

What is Matariki?

Matariki is the Māori name for a cluster of seven stars known as the Pleiades. Matariki appears in the eastern sky sometime around the shortest day of the year, and is thought to determine how successful the harvest crop will be in the coming season.

The brighter the stars, the more productive the crop will be. Nowadays, Matariki is seen as an important time to celebrate the earth, and show respect for the land on which we live.



Why not snuggle up warm with your family and whānau and, if you don't already celebrate Matariki, create some of these new traditions:

1 Share a Family Feast

Matariki is a fantastic opportunity to bring family together over a celebratory meal. Especially, with delicious and versatile vegetables such as kumara, parsnip, pumpkin, and yams all in season.

2 Make food together

Matariki is a time of teaching and learning, and the kitchen is an awesome place to pass on skills from one to another. How about using seasonal veggies in creative ways (kumara pie for dessert!), or bake star cookies for decorating as well as eating. (See our recipes on pages 3 and 13.)

3 Give Thanks

Make your Matariki feast a thanksgiving one, with each member of the family taking time to share what they're thankful for. Research shows that thankfulness is a key to joy and happiness. So Matariki is a great opportunity for children to learn this important practice.

4 Tell Family Stories

At Matariki, focussing on whakapapa gives us a better understanding of who we are, where we come from, and where we are going. This understanding builds resilience in children especially as they experience challenges. So encourage grandparents to tell stories of when they were young, share stories of challenges and trials the family has lived through, and reminisce about good times.

5 Renew New Year's Resolutions

New Year's Resolutions are typically made in January, but by the time June rolls around they are long forgotten. Why not use Matariki as a time to renew your resolutions?

6 Decorate

Finally, a reason for fairy lights against NZ's wintry night's sky. Celebrate the cheer of Matariki with neighbours as you light up trees, windows, and doorways. Homemade decorations crafted with children are the very best.

7 Get up early for some sleepy Matariki star gazing

Simon Lewis of the Canterbury Astronomical Society recommends binoculars! He says, "From mid June, just before sunrise, Matariki will lie low on the Eastern horizon. Find Orion's belt, sometimes called 'the pot', then look to the left.

You will see Matariki sparkling in the pre-dawn light. As the weeks progress, Matariki will rise a little higher each day, so keep trying if on a particular day your view is obstructed, or if the sky is cloudy."

Wish family and whānau a happy new year. "**Ngā mihi o te tau hou**".



Starry Night Biscuits

Based on a recipe by Nigella Lawson.

175 g butter
200 g brown sugar
2 x eggs
¼ t almond extract
350 g flour
50 g ground almonds
1 t salt
Star-shaped cookie cutter
2 x non-stick or lined baking trays

FOR THE ICING:
300 g icing sugar
Water to mix
Yellow food colouring

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Cream the butter and sugar, then beat in the eggs and almond extract.

In a separate bowl, combine the dry ingredients, then gradually add them to the butter mixture. If the mixture is too sticky for rolling, add a little flour.

Halve the dough, shape each half into a fat disc, and chill in a covered bowl or re-usable plastic bag for at least an hour.

Roll out one disc onto a floured surface until it is ½ cm thick. Cut out the star shapes and place onto the baking tray. Repeat with the second disc.

Bake for 8-12 minutes. The biscuits will look lightly golden around the edges and pale in the middle. Ice when cool.



When school isn't "fine":

Emotion coaching helps a son open up to his mum



Tuning in to Kids parenting programme

Kate Jones, Family Works social worker



Emotionally intelligent children enjoy increased self-confidence, greater physical health, better performance in school, and healthier social relationships.

Several times a year, Family Works offers Canterbury parents the opportunity to attend the parenting programme **Tuning in to Kids**. Tuning in to Kids is a 6-session course that teaches parents skills in emotion coaching, which is to recognise, understand and respond to children's emotions in an accepting, supportive way. This approach helps children to become emotionally intelligent, i.e., to understand and manage their emotions.

Tuning in to Kids is an international programme created by Dr Sophie Havighurst and Anne Harley at the University of Melbourne. It is based on the research of renowned psychologist Dr John Gottman. TIK has been proven to improve parenting, parent-child relationships, children's emotional competence, and behaviour.

If you would like to learn more, contact Janice Huddy in Christchurch at 03 363 8214 or janiceh@psusi.org.nz.

*"<Emotion Coaching parents> don't object to their children's displays of anger, sadness, or fear. Nor do they ignore them. **Instead, they accept negative emotions as a fact of life and they use emotional moments as opportunities for teaching their kids** important life lessons and building closer relationships with them."*

John M. Gottman,
Raising an Emotionally Intelligent Child

Like many mums, Maggie* used to ask her son Davis (7) how his day was and receive the one-word answer "fine". Then one day she discovered he was being bullied.

At school Davis was working with Family Works social worker Kate Jones to help him manage difficult emotions around worry and anxiety. In his mum's words "he was very sensitive, getting upset over the slightest thing" and pulling out his eyebrows and eye lashes. When Maggie talked to Kate about not knowing Davis was being bullied, Kate suggested Maggie try emotion coaching to help support their connection and communication, and she referred Maggie to the **Tuning in to Kids parenting programme offered by Family Works**. "Kate thought emotion coaching might encourage Davis to open up more about things that were bothering him," said Maggie.

Maggie was intrigued about Tuning in to Kids and about going to a parenting course in general.

"I'd always been told 'there's no book on parenting,'" said Maggie. "And I believed it, because everyone is different so I figured there's no right answer."

There's Something for Everyone at Tuning in to Kids

"The parents on the course were mixed," said Maggie. "Some were similar to me, while others had very different things going on." But Maggie appreciated being able to share experiences with the other parents and find they understood how she felt. "The course seemed to have something for everyone," she said. "Even if a particular topic didn't feel a hundred percent relevant to me, I would see it resonating with others in the group."

Maggie's own learning highlight was finding out how to ask Davis about sensitive topics indirectly. "I get more information by easing him into a topic instead of asking directly," said Maggie. "Tuning in to Kids taught me how to approach a subject using the right words. I learnt to think about how to approach a situation before speaking."

Maggie learnt this was especially true when children don't want to talk or are emotional. "When Davis is angry, instead of immediately telling him to explain himself, I now give him

time to cool down first. Actually, everyone needs that when they're emotional or angry—even I do—we all just need time."

Setting boundaries while supporting emotions

Another key learning for Maggie was how to set boundaries around behaviour while still supporting Davis' emotions. "Even when you're using techniques from the course, there is still a behavioural line the child shouldn't cross," she says. "Recognising that boundary is important because then I can sit Davis down and ask him to take responsibility for himself."

Maggie also feels confident identifying when a boundary is required and when it's not. For example, she can usually tell when Davis is being defiant versus just hungry, sick, or tired.

An Ongoing Shift

Thanks to Maggie's new emotion coaching skills, Davis opens up to his mum more now. And sometimes even volunteers information without her asking. "I had to find the right approach for Davis, and the Tuning in to Kids

course helped me do that," said Maggie. "It's definitely good information and helpful, and a great thing to carry on with," said Maggie.

The effects of emotion coaching on Maggie and Davis' relationship were clearly visible to Kate. "When I first met Maggie and Davis together, I could see they were close and shared a pretty strong connection," says Kate. "However, by our last session, Maggie had shared that they were spending more time together and I could observe that Maggie's approach to Davis had really strengthened their relationship."

Kate's work with Davis at his school has also had an effect on his wellbeing. "Davis is more chipper at school and has fewer issues in class," said Maggie. "I think it's a mixture of his getting the help he needs and my taking the Tuning in to Kids course."

*Real names have been changed.





Emotion coaching for the earthquake generation



SOPHIE HAVIGHURST is a child clinical psychologist and an Associate Professor at the University of Oslo in Norway and the University of Melbourne, Australia. Along with co-author Ann Harley, she developed the Tuning in to Kids (TIK) parenting programme, which is now in use around the world. Sophie grew up in Christchurch, and on a recent visit back to NZ was happy to catch up with us. In particular, she had some helpful tips for South Island parents.

Q1. Why do children need to learn emotional competence?
When children can understand and regulate their emotional world, they experience increased self-confidence, greater physical health, better performance in school, and healthier social relationships.

Q2. I'm a warm and loving parent. Isn't that enough?
Warm and loving parenting is fantastic for kids. One of the main predictors of good outcomes for kids is the level of warmth in a family and in the parent-child relationship. However, love and warmth don't necessarily lead to emotional competence. A child may feel good about themselves and have good self esteem, but they may not learn about emotions unless you explore and talk with them about emotions. That will take your child further.

Q3. What happens for a child when his or her emotions are supported?
Several things happen. Firstly, the child feels heard, understood, connected, and not alone with his or her big, overwhelming feelings. This helps the child to calm down. Secondly, an emotion-coaching parent often helps put words to what the child is feeling and experiencing. For example, the parent might say, while hugging the child close, "it sounds like you don't want to go to school today" or "you're worried Suzie won't play with you again". This process helps shift the child's experience from the feeling part of the brain to the thinking part, so the child achieves greater self awareness.



Q4. What prevents parents from effectively emotion coaching their children?
Sometimes it's just the circumstances—they might be in a hurry or overwhelmed themselves. And that's OK; you can't always respond the right way. However, often parents don't have the skills to know how to respond, or they fear what will happen—they don't trust that going toward emotion, instead of shutting it down, will actually lead to a better outcome for their child. Also, some people's beliefs about emotion get in the way, for example, "anger is bad" or "boys don't cry". There can be lots of reasons.

Q5. It's pretty tough for parents to learn new skills and discover they might not be doing things quite right. What do you say to parents with this concern?
Knowledge about the importance of emotion coaching is new information. While it's natural for parents to feel guilty about what they haven't done in the past, no one can apply skills they don't know about. We're increasing our knowledge about children's development all the time—for example, most mothers now know not to drink heavily through pregnancy—and as we learn new ways of doing things, we can just adopt them as they come to light.

Q6. You grew up in Christchurch and enjoyed a typical idyllic kiwi childhood. In recent years, our children in the South Island have experienced a far less idyllic start: 10,000 plus earthquakes have shaken them in their formative years. How can emotion coaching help our children and their families?

As loving parents, it can be difficult to see our children in pain, and so we try to protect them from it—we try to distract them or give them rational thinking strategies. These can be helpful, but we miss the emotion involved. Sometimes parents need to do the opposite—they need to allow their child to express his or her strong feelings of, for example, fear and worry about earthquakes. At Tuning in to Kids (TIK) we encourage parents to slow down and hear their child's pain before rushing in with a solution such as, "it's OK, we'll do this, this, and this". For example, first be connected physically to your child; hold him or her close, rocking or stroking as well if necessary. This helps

a child to feel safer, and offers a connection that helps them manage feelings better. At the same time, you might say things like, "it can be really scary can't it?" or "you sound like you're really worried about what might happen". Avoid moving quickly to "buts" and "howevers". Often in those times the child's emotion will actually shift. Only once they have started to calm down should parents start exploring things like, "I wonder what would help you go to school today?" or "I wonder if we can do some really big slow breaths and make our bodies go all soft and floppy". Help them to relax and breathe while they're close with you.

Q7. South Island children's lives are still disrupted with home repairs; school and education changes; and family difficulties. How can emotion coaching support our children experiencing ongoing anxiety?

Anxiety is the sort of feeling that can stay for a long time even when a child feels heard and supported. So as well as responding with empathy, parents need to teach children skills to manage their anxious feelings. We can teach children ways to breathe slowly and relax, to tense and release when they're stressed, and to use props like a necklace or pounamu that they can touch when feeling worried or doing hard things. Parents also need to tune in to children's different fears and worries, so they can recognise when a child's big feelings around a small issue, such as the frustration of their toast being buttered the wrong way are actually caused by the small issue triggering underlying anxious feelings.

Q8. Traditionally, NZ men haven't been encouraged to show their feelings. How do dads typically respond to TIK?
The response from dads is usually very positive. They like having an opportunity to learn skills around emotion that they were never taught growing up, and they typically adopt and engage with the skills very, very well. In fact, in the trials for our "Dads Tuning in to Kids" programme, we got some of the biggest changes from fathers.

Q9. Is TIK only for families experiencing problems?
No. TIK is designed for everyone. That's because the skills taught at TIK are not just parenting skills, they're relationship skills. People often say it improves their relationship with their partner, their adult siblings, and even their work colleagues. Really, it's about tuning into others, not just kids.



THREE VOLUNTEERS, THREE JOURNEYS, THREE WORDS OF ADVICE:

JUST DO IT!

Enliven and Family Works volunteers are vital to the work we do at Presbyterian Support—last year 297 volunteers donated 32,409 hours! When surveyed, 85% of these volunteers believed they make a positive difference in their community, and that volunteering improves their own lives too.

Shane Torrance was recognised recently by Volunteer Nelson with their Nominated Volunteer Award.



We are always looking for volunteers to help at our Enliven day programmes for older people. Join our friendly, supported volunteer team to make a positive difference.

To learn more or to apply, visit www.enlivenuppersouth.org.nz/volunteer.

He aroha whakatō, he aroha puta mai
If kindness is sown, then kindness you shall receive.

SHANE

Shane Torrance doesn't fit the stereotype of a volunteer at an older person's day programme. And with his shaved head, tattoos, and heavy-metal t-shirts, for a while he struggled to break into volunteering at all. But Shane's appearance belies a big soft heart, and now the older ladies who once wouldn't let him hold their handbags while they climbed into the Enliven van, call him their friend.

About four years ago Shane started volunteering one day a week at Nelson's Totara club. "I was just looking for something to do," he said. A painter and decorator by trade, Shane had lost his legs and some eyesight as a result of Type 1 Diabetes. He could no longer work, and was "going crazy" at home.

Now Shane volunteers on four van runs and two Totara programmes per week, and is paid to work in the kitchen three times per week. At Totara Club he helps with morning tea, chats with members, and helps with activities, such as calling for Housie.

Because Shane knows what it feels like to almost lose his independence, he enjoys helping others who may be struggling with theirs. "Shane is a great example to our Totara members dealing with memory or physical challenges of their own," said Trish Armstrong, Day Programme Coordinator. "Shane still lives alone independently, and he doesn't let his disabilities slow him down."

Through volunteering Shane has developed an extensive network and made many, many friends. And for anyone considering volunteering, he has this advice:

"Just do it. You'll get far more out of it than you put in – even if the people you're helping need it more than you."

ALASDAIR



Alasdair Freeborn's experience is similar to Shane's in that he started to volunteer with Enliven after health issues ended his dairy farming career. Ongoing autoimmune disease now makes paid work impossible. Fortunately for Alasdair, he lives in Ashburton, where both he and Presbyterian Support are members of Mid Canterbury TimeBank. TimeBank is a community circle of giving in which members—local organisations and individuals—share skills with each other. Members earn time credits for the work they do, and then use those credits to "buy" another member's time to get the services they need. Everyone's time is equal, regardless of the type of work, so one hour always equals one time credit. Alasdair volunteers for Presbyterian Support (Enliven) as a van driver, earning time credits whenever he does so. He then redeems his credits for weekly housecleaning, plus gardening tasks, meals, and baking.

It took Alasdair a long time to adjust to not working anymore. Initially he was devastated. However, volunteering gave him a new purpose. Alasdair now makes deposits in TimeBank as often as he can, so that if his health issues worsen he can access more support in the future. Through volunteering, Alasdair says he's "met the most fantastic people". And funnily enough, his advice is the same as Shane's:

"Just do it. You've got nothing to lose and everything to gain."

Note: Presbyterian Support Mid Canterbury earns TimeBank credits via office space at the Trevor Wilson Centre...by the hour, of course!

TimeBank circles are located all around the upper South Island—Addington, Lyttelton, Motueka, Hurunui, Ashburton, New Brighton, Selwyn, Sumner, Waimakariri, and Ōtakaro. Learn more at www.timebank.org.nz.

MARILYN



Marilyn McLellan is no stranger to volunteering—she's spent years donating time and energy to children, young people, and now older people. These days she hosts an Enliven HomeShare group in north Christchurch.

When asked what she gets out of volunteering, Marilyn's voice gets dreamy and thoughtful. "There's just something that you can't put a name to," she says. "You hear the joy and laughter of people who might be living on their own and wouldn't experience that joy if it weren't for your help. There's this immense satisfaction from knowing you've made somebody's day better."

Marilyn has learnt important life lessons through her years as a volunteer. "Patience is a big one," she says. "I'll teach one of our members with Alzheimer's the same board game week after week, and each time he says 'I've never played this before'. You do that for six weeks and you just get over yourself."

She's also learnt to "serve others in the way they need to be served, not in the way I want to serve them". Marilyn ensures she works with members' wants, needs, and idiosyncrasies; whether that's not eating vegetables at the meal, only using a particular bathroom, or listening to the same stories over and over again because it's important to them.

"Volunteering has made me more aware of people in situations I hadn't thought of before, particularly the elderly. It's easy to think that because an older person has their own home and their own family that they're OK. But they may not be." Marilyn says she's more likely to say hello to elderly people in the supermarket, or offer to help them now than she was before.

Marilyn's advice for others considering volunteering is in the same vein as Shane's and Alasdair's:

"Go for it," she says. "Give it a go. What you get out of it is much more than you expect."

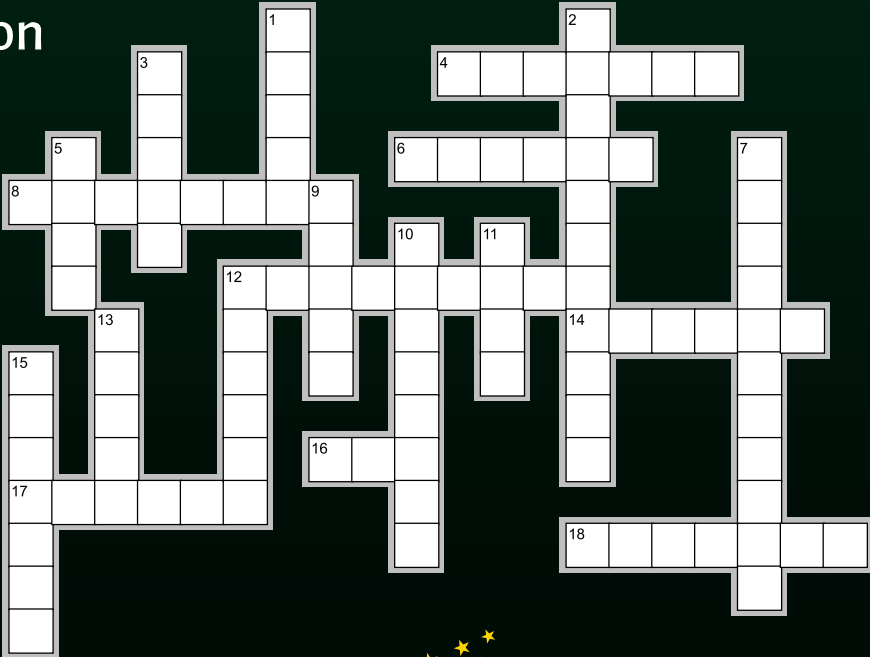
A Crossword for the Season

ACROSS

- 4. Oral traditions.
- 6. A fine NZ wool used for warm clothing.
- 8. Handy footwear for rainy days.
- 12. Your genealogy. (Māori)
- 14. What sound do autumn leaves make?
- 16. At Matariki families gather to share yummy what? (Māori)
- 17. A popular jacket made of down.
- 18. A cream-coloured root vegetable.

DOWN

- 1. "Look out, look out! Jack who is about?"
- 2. Living ancestors. In Māori, tipuna.
- 3. A popular winter sport in NZ.
- 5. Matariki will officially be celebrated on the 15th day of what month in 2018?
- 7. Matariki is a good time to renew your new year's what?
- 9. The Matariki cluster contains seven of these.
- 10. Our unique Aotearoa new year celebration.
- 11. Another word for autumn.
- 12. The coldest season.
- 13. Long and knitted, an essential garment in winter.
- 15. A gourd that makes a tasty soup.



I'll meet you at the Trash Lab!

Kids find social connection through the ordinary magic of play

Haere rā and goodbye to lonely lunchtimes, boredom, and bullying—there's a homegrown play project spreading through kiwi schools right now. It's called the Trash Lab, and it's giving NZ children a space at school to connect with one another through free creative play.

For many children, lunchtime is the best part of the school day. The sports field, adventure playground, and library can be favourite spaces to play soccer or tag, hang out with friends, or retreat with a good book. But for others lunchtime can be lonely or socially fraught, and altogether too long.

In mid-2016, some parents at Thorrrington Primary in Christchurch partnered with the school to address the needs of their own children who were struggling with lunchtimes. "Thorrrington is a fantastic school," says Vivienne Wallace, a parent and co-creator of the Trash Lab. "But kids will be kids. And some of our boys in particular, who were all great kids—smart, lively, imaginative, and kind—were experiencing conflict of some sort every lunchtime. Even within their own friendship group."

Sarah Suckling, another co-creator and parent said, "The devil finds work for idle hands. We knew our boys just needed something to do, but they weren't interested in kicking balls through goals. Not every child is."

So the parents embarked on an initiative to introduce "loose parts" play to lunchtimes, and so the Trash Lab was born. Loose parts are "materials that can be moved, carried, combined, taken apart and put back together in multiple ways", and they give children unlimited options for using them imaginatively. At the Trash Lab, these materials include old tyres, tent material, road cones, carpet squares, bicycle inner tubes, computer keyboards, and other large-scale junk. All the materials are stored in a shed designated to a play-friendly space on the school grounds. Each lunchtime, two parent volunteers open the shed to oversee the parts' removal and return.

Creativity and social connection

Mā te tuakana te teina e tōtika,
Mā te teina te tuakana e tōtika
The older will lead the younger and the
younger will lead the older

"We knew the Trash Lab would really work for certain kids," says Sarah. "But we didn't expect a quarter of the school to turn up some days."

When the bell goes, children rush to the Trash Lab to nab their desired materials, then the race is on to maximise the 45 minutes of play before lunchtime is over. Forts are a popular build, followed by vehicles of every type; swings are built out of old bicycle inner tubes and fabric. A visitor to the Trash Lab might see a movie theatre, a funeral procession, a fashion show, a space ship, even a massage table. And the play is active—children will chase, drag, or pull resources around the entire space.

Throughout the session older children play with younger ones, children find playmates outside their own social group, siblings play together, and children alone find a playmate (or they can happily play by themselves). And as they work on their shared projects, children collaborate and problem solve, learning social skills along the way. As Brigitte Bilbe, a teacher and parent at Thorrrington describes it, "They work together, share resources and ideas, look after each other, compromise, compliment each other, and even argue a bit, which is good too!"

Brigitte often takes time after lunch to debrief with children about their Trash Lab experiences. "They talk about their creations a lot," she says. "There are often reports of squabbles, usually over sharing, but we talk about the problem and then model what could have been said to help the situation."

Victoria Newcombe, a parent at Thorrrington, is also Family Works service manager and a Child / Family Psychologist. She says, *"Not only does the Trash Lab allow children to be creative, use social skills, and mix with peers outside their own classes; it also involves parents and teachers, and it builds and models a sense of community within the school."*



The Trash Lab team. From left, Vivienne Wallace, Dr Sarah Suckling, Keryn Davis, and Sharon Manson.

A happier place to be

Carl Scurr, also a teacher at Thorrrington, is a frequent visitor to the Trash Lab when he's on duty. "When the Trash Lab's open there's really not that much for me to do," he says. "It makes the whole school playground a happier place to be."

But the benefits of the Trash Lab extend beyond lunchtimes to children's homes and families. It's turned some children's experience of school right around—from not wanting to go to school, to being happy to do so.

"After the Trash Lab opened, we didn't hear any stories of lunchtime conflict at home again for a long, long time," says Vivienne. "And many parents have told us the same."

The Trash Lab team are now on a mission to spread the happiness to schools all around NZ. Several other Christchurch schools have introduced Trash Labs, and there's even one at Mt Cook school in Wellington. To learn more, e-mail Vivienne at trashlab.play@gmail.com.



"When children play, they don't just have fun and learn social skills; they also express their experiences and feelings. When children are given space and time to simply play (without technology!) they process worries and concerns through role play and narrative. Basically, they use play to put their life into order. Giving South Island children space to play at school, in particular, supports them to process some of the major events and upheavals they've experienced in their early years."

Merle Brown, FamilyWorks play therapist in Ashburton.





YOUNG PEOPLE ACHIEVE SUCCESS IN THE YOUTH SERVICE

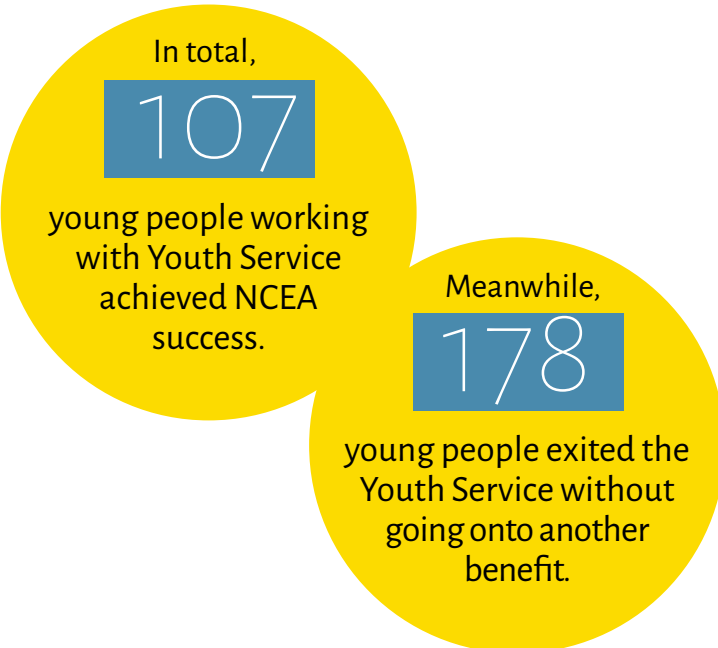
2017 was a standout year for young people in the Youth Service achieving NCEA results and "aging out" of the Youth Service with the skills and confidence to live independently. They are either finding employment or moving on to further studies/training without needing to go on a benefit of any kind.

These positive results are significant because the Youth Service works with some of the most vulnerable young people in society. Many have grown up in complex family situations experiencing high levels of risk and adversity, have had limited support from family and whanau, and have needed financial assistance from the government from an early age to survive.

Substantial long-term research from NZ and overseas indicates that the kind of disadvantaged start these young people experience often leads to poor long-term life outcomes, including the risk that they will remain dependent on government financial assistance for most of their lives.

The success our young people in Christchurch, Ashburton, Greymouth, Blenheim and Nelson have achieved is a credit to their own hard work and dedication, and to their youth coaches.

THEY NOW HAVE HOPE FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE.



The Youth Service provides young people 16-19 years old with coaching and mentoring to help them into education, training or work-based learning. Our youth coaches also support the teens with day-to-day issues while they're getting sorted.

Youth Service is a Work and Income initiative with eligibility criteria, so the Family Works team also helps with the application process if necessary.

Youth Coaches support youth to:

- ✓ Complete their Youth Payment or Young Parent Payment applications
- ✓ Better manage their money
- ✓ Assess and access education options
- ✓ Stay healthy and well
- ✓ Be a good parent (if they have children)

Coaches also serve as advocates, making sure youth receive the assistance they're entitled to.



Sarah's Story

Sarah (not her real name) was involved with the Youth Service for over two years. "The Youth Payment made school accessible for me" she says. "Before, I was trying to work and go to school as well. It just wasn't working though. Every single day I was on the go, and it was very stressful. I'm able to go to school now and not stress about finance and stuff."



Sarah has worked hard to become independent and learn to live with very little money. She attributes her positive attitude about the Youth Service to the relationship she has with her Youth Coach.

"She's amazing, like wow—she's like a good friend—she's very easy to talk to, very supportive, a real confidence builder; she just makes everything so easy to work with. She was totally on my side with my goals to get me where I can be and to be the best person I can be. She always made sure I was in a very safe house when I was boarding, and really looked out for me." Sarah passed year 13 at school "and I did it purely because my Youth Coach pushed me".

Sarah is confident about moving on to tertiary study. When asked what she is most proud of achieving during her time with the Youth Service, Sarah replied "knowing I have a bright future".



Pumpkin (or Kumara!) Pie

Pumpkin pie is a traditional dish in the USA for Thanksgiving Day. How about using our own seasonal pumpkins or kumara in this dessert to recognise the thanks we give at Matariki?!

Pie Filling:

- 3 x eggs
- ¾ C sugar
- ½ t cinnamon
- 1/8 t nutmeg
- ½ t ginger
- Pinch cloves
- Pinch salt
- 2 C pureed pumpkin (or kumara)
- 2 C light cream or whole milk
- 1 purchased Flaky Pie Crust (or make your own)

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Beat the eggs with the sugar, then add the spices and salt. Stir in the pumpkin puree and then the light cream/whole milk. Warm this mixture in a medium saucepan over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, until it is hot to the touch; do not boil.

Warm the pie crust in the oven for a few minutes then remove and place the pie plate on a baking sheet.

Pour the filling mixture into the hot crust and bake 30-40 minutes until the mixture shakes like jelly but is still quite moist. Cool on a rack and serve warm or at room temperature.

Based on a recipe by Mark Bittman

Around the Region



CHRISTCHURCH

Children's Day, March 4th

Face painting, Anyone? Or beading? Or stone painting? Or... The Christchurch Family Works team again made for a lively presence at the city's 2018 Children's Day event by offering all of the above. Led by Julie Forman, volunteers laboured away in the hot sun, painting earnest upturned faces and tying beaded bracelets onto tiny wrists. They were just a small subset of the over 200 volunteers taking part in Children's Day to make it a fantastic community event for everyone.



WEST COAST

A Very HomeShare Christmas on the West Coast

They threatened to return in December and they did!

Following an "amazing" mid-winter party, 54 HomeShare clients and staff on the West Coast returned to Reefton for a Christmas party at Dawson's Hotel.

Special guest Vaughan Milner, PSUSI CEO, travelled over to join them, and was treated to a Christmas-themed game of pass the parcel, a yummy lunch, and live piano and guitar entertainment. Again, children from Sacred Heart School came to sing.

It was another fabulous outing for West Coast HomeShare.



NELSON

Volunteers from Afar.....

Nelson Day Programmes have had volunteers all the way from Germany! Barbora and Wiebke are studying Art Therapy in Germany. In order to complete the practical component of their degree, they are spending three months with the Enliven day programmes in Nelson. Of course, the women have combined their studies with plenty of touring around the country.

The students have facilitated many group activities. A couple of the topics were 'symbols' and 'body image' which brought about great discussions on Māori culture and tattooing. The girls were very interested to learn about New Zealand culture and our Totara members appointed themselves as unofficial tour guides on the "must see and do" of our country.



MARLBOROUGH

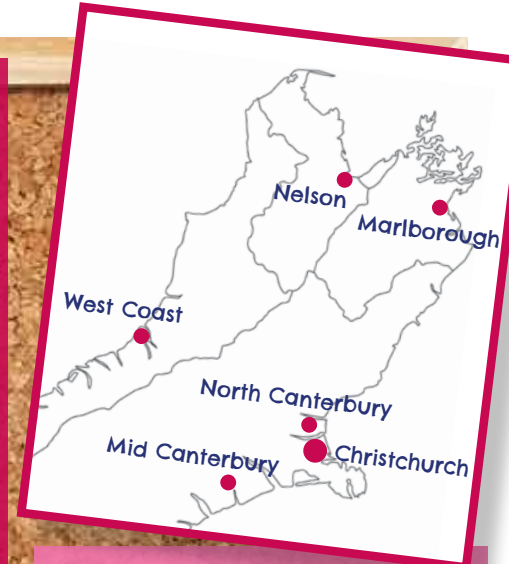
Friday Night Sports Programme for Teens

For four weeks in March, Blenheim youth got to hang out at the Sundown Sports Series, trying new sports, learning about a healthy lifestyle, and making new social connections. The Series was so popular that another is planned for 2019.

After burgers, wraps, or Subway and sugar free beverages, teens aged 12-18 learnt about healthy eating, managing anxiety, and community law; and received drug and alcohol advice. Attendees then tried hockey, badminton, futsal, and basketball. "Even hip hop and Scottish longball were thrown in," said Darlene Purdie, Family Works mentoring coordinator in Marlborough.

The sports were delivered by local clubs and any skill level could try. If teens tried a sport and liked it, they could connect with the club to learn how to join. "About ten Family Works families came along," said Darlene. "It was a great way to spend a Friday night."

Sundown Sports Series was hosted by Marlborough Youth Trust with support from the Marlborough District Council, Red Cross, Cancer Society, and Family Works.



MID CANTERBURY

Parenting Week in Ashburton

For the first time ever, Ashburton hosted its own Parenting Week. Parents around the district were encouraged to register for a free week of activities and seminars with an aim to provide support and education to all.

The week kicked off with a parenting expo. "I fully support this opportunity for parents to learn more about services available in Ashburton, as we all know parenting is about the hardest job you can do," said Jackie Girvan, PS Mid Canterbury Regional Manager. "At the expo Presbyterian Support showcased the wealth of parenting resources we offer through Family Works, including play therapy, Incredible Years parenting, and social and counselling support."

Speakers and experts provided tips and tools for building stronger families. Catherine Gallagher, a Christchurch psychologist and recent contributor to People Helping People magazine, began the week of evening seminars with a booked-out session on Understanding & Managing Children's Anxiety.

It is hoped that Parenting Week will be offered every other year.



NORTH CANTERBURY

"Live and Give" Seniors Expo in Rangiora

Recently several community groups, including PSUSI, organised an event to support the wellbeing of older people in the Waimakariri and Hurunui Districts. The title of the event, "Live and Give" reflects the importance of learning from each other's culture and celebrating moving into the older years, rather than seeing it as a time of loss.

Approximately 270 people attended the expo, which was held at the Rangiora Baptist Church hall on Wednesday, February 28th. At least 50 stall holders highlighted the range of services and opportunities in the region that are relevant to older people. Older people from the community spoke about what makes them feel connected, and a specialist medical team spoke about healthy aging.

The event was funded by the CDHB, Rangiora-Ashley Community Board, and Riccarton Rotary.





Jackie Girvan: Retiring from PS Mid Canterbury, but Not from Her Community

Back in 2003, when Jackie Girvan first took up her post as Regional Manager in Mid Canterbury, Presbyterian Support in Mid Canterbury employed six staff and offered just two support programmes. As she prepares to retire this year, Jackie leaves a robust organisation in her wake; one that she has grown to 20+ staff supporting 11 programmes—the centre helps approximately 1,000 local Mid Cantabrians every year. Jackie also managed PS West Coast operations during 2011-2015.

Jackie believes Presbyterian Support's growth in the Ashburton region wouldn't have been possible without the generosity and support of the local community. Local groups such as the Trevor Wilson Trust, Community Trust of Mid and South Canterbury, Ashburton Trust, the Ashburton Benevolent Trust and the Mackenzie Charitable Foundation give significant funding.

"Without them we wouldn't have the services we do. All the money that's given locally is spent locally, it can't go elsewhere," she said.

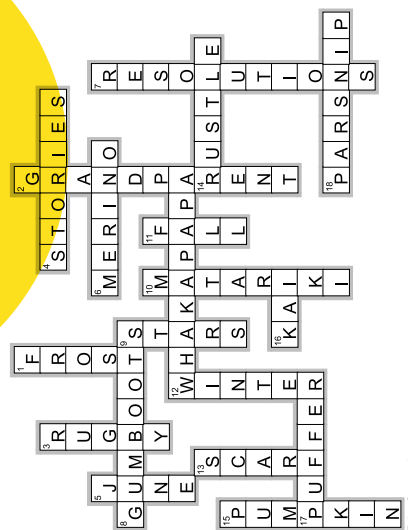
"Also so many wonderful small things happen because of our networks, the networks we have in the community, with other agencies and with health agencies".

However, there's no doubt that Jackie's leadership, ability to make things happen, and attention to staff and community needs have contributed enormously to growing Presbyterian Support's impact in Ashburton. Notably, Jackie has focused on the issue of social housing, and last year Presbyterian Support successfully partnered with a private investor to open some shared accommodation for older people. Following this initiative, the Ashburton Housing and Support Trust has been established, which aims to provide affordable rental accommodation for older people.

Initially, Jackie had no concrete plans post-retirement apart from "sleeping in" and "sitting back for a while to see what happens". However, though she doesn't finish work till June, already Jackie is committed to chairing the new Ashburton Housing and Support Trust and contributing as a trustee to the Ashburton Benevolent Trust. More community tinkering is sure to come with mentoring roles and volunteering also in the pipeline.

With her background in nursing and health, and all the experience and skills she has to offer, not to mention her commitment to the Ashburton community, Jackie's departure will be a great loss to Presbyterian Support USI, but her valuable contributions to Mid Canterbury will carry on.

Crossword Answers from p9.



Mentors Needed.



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