

COMMUNITY CONNECT

JULY 2025



ANGLICANFAMILYCARE



Kia ora koutou

Welcome everyone to our new look pānui. We are excited to launch our new digital Community Connect, landing in your inbox every two months.

By moving to a bi-monthly pānui, we can keep you better connected to our mahi, our people and our news. Reducing the amount of printing that we do also supports our commitment to environmental sustainability. We hope you enjoy this new look.

In this edition, we share a powerful story from a former Family Start client who shares about the impact the Family Start programme had on her life. We also celebrate our South Otago team's move into Te Pou Ō Mata-Au – the Clutha District War Memorial and Community Centre and highlight our Midwinter LEGO® Appeal supporting tamariki through therapeutic play. Finally, we take time to get to know one of our valued team members, Jasmin Brown.

Winter has well and truly arrived, and this places additional stress on the whānau we are supporting who are already facing many challenges. I want to say a huge thank you to our donors and supporters as your ongoing support enables Anglican Family Care to continue do the mahi we do. We couldn't do this without you.

Ngā mihi nui,
Lynette Finnie
General Manager



We've Moved!

Our South Otago team were excited to move into the brand-new Te Pou ō Mata-Au, the Balclutha Community Hub, on Wednesday 18 June!

You'll now find us at 6 Clyde Street, Balclutha, a shared space built on community collaboration, where local services can work more closely together to support whānau.

Our phone numbers and email addresses have stayed the same, and we continue to provide the same services, with the same passionate team, just in a new and improved space.

We're proud to be part of this collective approach and can't wait to welcome you into our new home.



Whānau Story of the Month

More than 14 years ago, Katie was a young mum navigating a difficult path. With the guidance, compassion, and support of her Family Start whānau worker, she began to build a better future for herself and her son. The lessons she learned not only transformed their lives at the time, they also helped her confidently parent her second child years later. Katie shares her heartfelt story, and the lasting impact of Anglican Family Care's Family Start programme.

Read more about Katie's journey, as told in her own words and see how your support continues to make a difference for whānau like hers.



At just 19 years old, Katie faced the overwhelming challenges of being a young mother to a premature baby with serious health issues, all while navigating an unhealthy relationship and working full-time. Her son's heart condition required surgery at six months old, and the emotional toll left Katie struggling to cope.

Recognising her need for additional support, her Plunket nurse referred her to Anglican Family Care's Family Start programme, a decision that would change her life.

Initially hesitant, Katie gradually built a trusting relationship with her Family Start worker, who provided guidance, activities to support her son's development, and encouragement to set personal goals. With this support, Katie left her unhealthy relationship, moved back home, and pursued full-time study while raising her toddler. Her Family Start worker was her constant cheerleader, helping her balance the demands of parenting, studying, and working, while also encouraging her to care for herself. This support led Katie to discover her passion for working in the disability community, which reshaped her career path.

By the time Katie and her son graduated from the programme, their lives had transformed. Katie was studying for her bachelor's degree, her son's heart issues had healed, and they were thriving. Over the years, Katie built a fulfilling career, remarried, and welcomed another child. Her son grew into a confident, accomplished young man, excelling in sports and academics, and is now pursuing theatre studies at university. The skills Katie learned through the programme also benefitted her second child, creating a ripple effect of positive change in her family's life.

Katie wholeheartedly recommends Anglican Family Care to anyone in need of parenting support. She credits the programme's kindness, non-judgmental approach, and genuine care for helping her build a brighter future. Fourteen years later, the impact of our support continues to shape her family's lives in profound ways.

Read Katie's story on [our website](https://www.anglicanfamilycare.org.nz/whanau-stories/ripples-of-positive-change).

(www.anglicanfamilycare.org.nz/whanau-stories/ripples-of-positive-change)



How We Supported Our Community

In June,

- **58 tamariki** in Dunedin were referred to **Social Workers in Schools (SWiS)** for extra support,
- **90 whānau** across Otago received **home-based** parenting support through our **Home-Based Family Support Service**.
- In **South Otago**, **5 whānau** impacted by family violence were supported through our **Family Centred Service**,
- **125 pēpi** and their whānau were **supported to build strong, safe and connected beginnings** through our **Family Start Programme** across Otago.



Build Whānau Up with Lego

Help us build confidence, connection and resilience

This winter, we're calling for donations of new or gently-used LEGO® sets to support the therapeutic LEGO® Groups run by our amazing Social Workers in Schools (SWiS) kaimahi across 5 Dunedin schools.

These groups are so much more than play — they're carefully designed to help tamariki:

- ✓ Develop positive friendships
- ✓ Build self-esteem
- ✓ Strengthen problem-solving and communication skills
- ✓ Grow resilience in a safe and supportive space

LEGO® is a powerful tool that encourages creativity and emotional expression, and it's making a real difference for tamariki facing tough times.

Your donation will help us expand these groups to more schools and support more children across our rohe.

- ♥ Drop off donations at any Anglican Family Care office
- ♥ Or get in touch to arrange collection: Communication@FamilyCare.org.nz



Meet Our Team



Jasmine Brown

*Family Violence Intervention Service Coordinator
South Otago*

How long have you been with Anglican Family Care and what's your background in?

My role with the South Otago Family Violence Inter-Agency Response Service (FVIARS) is part of the mahi delivered by Anglican Family Care's Family Centred Service in the Clutha region. Before this, I worked in crisis financial aid, where I saw the deep impact of violence on families' lives. That led me to a role at a refuge, supporting caregivers and children experiencing homelessness due to family violence. These experiences paved the way to my work with AFC, where I now collaborate with agencies like New Zealand Police and Tokomairiro Waiora to coordinate responses and support for whānau.

What inspired you to pursue a career in social work/family care?

Supporting whānau through both the tough stuff and the celebrations is incredibly meaningful to me. I love the two sides of the social work coin, walking alongside families through challenges, and also advocating for broader changes that help build safer, more supportive communities. Being able to do this in the intersection of family violence and parenting mahi is really special, it feels like where I'm meant to be.

What do you find most rewarding about your work?

It's powerful to see the transformation in whānau when they're truly heard and supported. Being met without judgement can be the first step in believing that a life free from violence is possible. Our work isn't always linear, but when whānau feel empowered, when their voice is uplifted and their place in the waka is honoured, you see them start to bloom. That's what keeps me going.



Whānau Resource of the Month

♥ Little Steps Make a Big Difference

Practising self-regulation helps tamariki feel safe, calm, and confident in their world.



Breathe Like a Balloon Puku

Place your hands on your puku (tummy).

Breathe in slowly through your nose and feel your puku rise like a balloon.

Breathe out through your mouth and feel it flatten.

Repeat slowly 3–5 times.



🧸 Create a Calm-Down Space

Choose a quiet spot in the house or classroom.

Add some cushions, soft toys, books, or calming items.

Use it when you need a break or feel overwhelmed.

It's not a punishment—it's a safe space.



💬 Name the Feeling

"It sounds like you're feeling angry."

"That made you really excited!"

Naming emotions helps tamariki understand and manage them.

It also helps them feel seen and supported.



👁️ Try the '5-4-3-2-1' Grounding Game

Great for calming anxiety or big emotions:

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can touch
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste

These tips are now available to download from the "[Resources](#)" section on our website.



Shout Out To

St Hilda's Collegiate School



Donna Davidson (Fundraising, Marketing & Communications Manager) and Sarah Thornton (FMC Administrator) receive sensory tools from St Hilda's Collegiate School students

A few weeks ago, we visited St Hilda's Collegiate School to talk about how something as simple as a fidget toy can help tamariki manage big emotions. During our visit, we had some fantastic conversations with students about how sensory tools support them in their everyday lives.

Now, we're so grateful to receive the beautifully assembled sensory packs created by their Whanaungatanga groups. Each one is filled with thoughtful items to bring calm, focus, and a sense of control to tamariki in our care.

These gifts will go straight to children who need them. Thank you, St Hilda's, for your kindness, empathy and manaakitanga.

How You Can Help

If you would like to support our mahi, you could:

- make a one-off or monthly donation direct to our bank account (02-0912-0018828-07) or via our website [Anglican Family Care](https://www.anglicanfamilycare.org.nz),
- share our [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#) posts,
- nominate us for your workplace giving,
- refer a local business who might support our vehicle sponsorship goal,
- host or attend a fundraising event.

If you would like more information about how you can help, get in touch with one of our team.

How Does My Donation Help?



\$20

provides a supermarket voucher towards a family's grocery bill



\$50

helps provide a respite caregiver for a night



\$100

contributes towards a whānau or social worker visiting a family in their home

Make a difference to Otago whānau
Donate today

www.anglicanfamilycare.org.nz/donate

