

COMMUNITY CONNECT

NOVEMBER 2026

ANGLICANFAMILYCARE



Kia ora koutou,

Welcome to my first edition of Community Connect since joining Anglican Family Care at the end of September. It has been a privilege to step into an organisation with more than 55 years of history supporting tamariki, rangatahi and whānau across Otago. Over these first few weeks, I have been deeply impressed by the dedication of our kaimahi, the strength of our partnerships, and the resilience and courage of the whānau who walk alongside us on their journeys of change.

This edition highlights the life-changing impact of our Family Start service through the story of a young North Otago mother who was navigating a high-risk pregnancy following the devastating loss of her first baby, born still. Facing complex challenges including grief, limited support networks and concerns for her family's wellbeing, she was supported by our Family Start team through regular home visits, parenting guidance, advocacy, safety planning, emotional support, and connections to specialist services. By building a trusting relationship and walking alongside her every step of the way, our kaimahi helped strengthen her confidence, improve safety and stability for her children, and support positive long-term outcomes for her whānau. It is a powerful example of how strengthening connections and enhancing mana can create lasting change.

Last month, we came together for our Annual General Meeting, held on Wednesday 14 October. While it was an opportunity to reflect on the achievements of the past year and the impact made possible through collective effort, it was also marked by a profound sense of loss. We remembered and acknowledged the sudden passing of Elisabeth Cunningham, the Bishop's Delegate on our Board. Elisabeth was a valued member of the Anglican Family Care whānau whose wisdom, compassion and commitment to our mission will be deeply missed. Our thoughts remain with Elisabeth's family, friends and all who knew and worked alongside her.

As always, none of our work would be possible without the generosity and support of our wider community. Whether through grants, donations, gifts in kind, volunteering, partnerships, or advocacy, your support enables us to continue providing services that strengthen whānau, enhance mana, and help tamariki thrive. Your contribution is never taken for granted, and we invite you to take a moment to visit our thank you segment to see the organisations and funders who stand beside us in this important work.

Ngā mihi,
Kelly Linwood
General Manager



At Anglican Family Care, we know that early, consistent, and compassionate intervention can change the trajectory of a child's life. Our theory of change is grounded in the belief that when we strengthen the capacity of parents and caregivers, through trusted relationships, practical support, and evidence informed guidance, tamariki are safer, whānau are more resilient, and futures become brighter.

As told by Sue, Team Leader Family Start – Alice's story illustrates this impact in action. Through sustained engagement with Family Start, and a trauma-informed, strengths-based approach, Alice has navigated significant challenges to create a safer, more nurturing environment for her tamariki. It shows how walking alongside whānau, at their pace, with respect for their mana, can support lasting change, even in the face of adversity.

A Future Rewritten Through Support and Strength

Alice was referred to Family Start by her midwife when she was four months pregnant. John, her partner was in prison at the time of enrolment. Their first child was born still and they then went on to have another daughter, May, who was three years old at enrolment.

When Alice was 28 weeks pregnant, she was admitted to Dunedin Hospital due to having a high-risk pregnancy. She planned for May to be cared for by her mother, but as John was discharged from prison around this time, he was able to have May in his full-time care. Family Start visits continued with Alice in hospital, and with John to support his sole parenting of three-year-old May, who he had not seen for over six months. Once baby Joe was born, and Alice and baby were discharged home, John was directed by Probation that he needed to find somewhere to live as there was a non-association order in place. Both Alice and John wanted to parent their children together, so John was given permission by Probation to attend Family Start visits.

Things started to go downhill when John started using drugs and alcohol, placing his partner and children at risk of harm. Alice declined a referral to Women's Refuge at that time. However, John was admitted to residential rehab where he spent 12 weeks. Unfortunately, when he was discharged, he went back to using [drugs] again, and the level of violence in the home escalated. He was later arrested. Family Start supported Alice to get a Protection order and Parenting Order and she then agreed to work with Women's Refuge, completing their education programme twice, and having a police safety alarm, security cameras and a safety plan.

During a visit, I noticed May was very withdrawn and sat very close to me. I asked Alice if everything was OK. We went outside to talk, and she told me John was back in the house, she was very scared and the children had witnessed his drug use and anger. Police were called and John was arrested and sent to prison.

Alice was raised in care herself and whilst she has very few memories of this, she remembers how it felt to have an adult towering over her, shouting at her. She has been intentional with her parenting of her two children, to ensure they feel loved and safe. She has been receptive to information shared and developing strategies to increase her parenting capacity.

Whilst on Family Start Alice has achieved so much. She is child-focused and they are thriving in school and ECE. She has managed to leave an abusive relationship, which involved drugs, alcohol and violence, to keep herself and the children safe. She has gained her driving license, started part time work, and bought a car. She also attends regular counselling after being referred by Family Start to address her trauma.

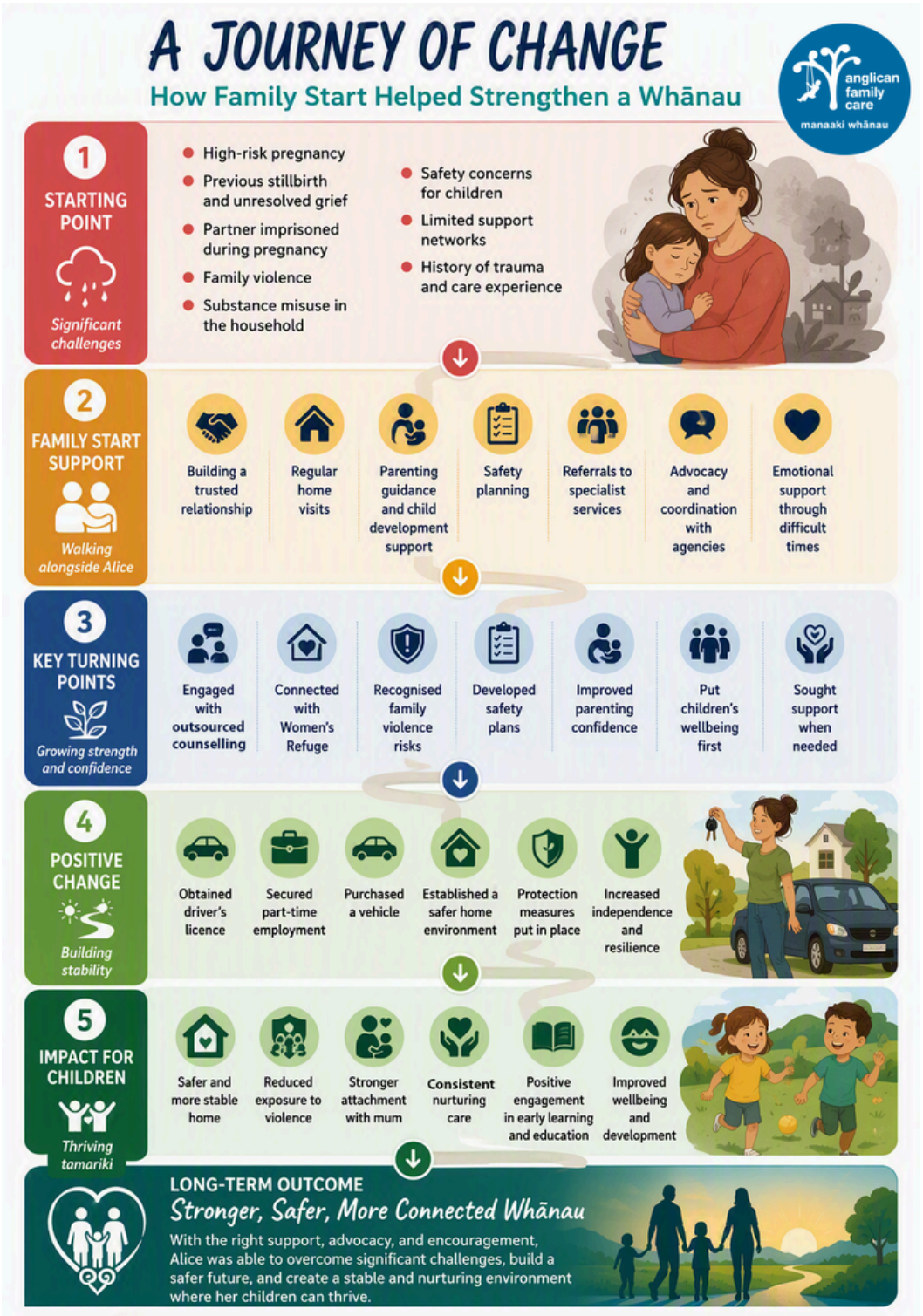
Alice is now in a new relationship, and they are expecting their first child together. I asked if she would like to exit Family Start and she replied, “Family Start has been the most reliable and consistent thing in my life, and I would like to continue with this new baby.”

**Names and images have been changed to protect client privacy.*

Every family's story is different, but lasting change often happens step by step.

This illustration shows how Family Start walks alongside whānau as they move from significant challenges toward greater safety, stability, and hope for the future. It highlights not just the support we provide, but the positive changes that happen along the way, from building trust and confidence to creating a safer home environment where tamariki can thrive.

Behind every outcome is a relationship, practical support, and the determination of a whānau working towards a better future. With the right support at the right time, challenges that once felt overwhelming can become opportunities for growth, connection, and lasting change.





Ngā Mihi Nui

In our last newsletter, we highlighted our partnerships with both St Hilda's Collegiate and Selwyn College.

Both of these Anglican institutions have been supporting us by collecting items, or fundraising to support our mahi throughout Otago.





Craft Kits for School Holidays

We are incredibly grateful to the students and staff of St Hilda's Collegiate School for their ongoing support of Anglican Family Care and the tamariki and whānau we work alongside across Dunedin.

Recently, students put together an amazing collection of activity and craft packs, filled with colouring activities, games, creative projects, and hands on fun. Our kaimahi loved matching these thoughtful packs with whānau they knew would enjoy them, and the feedback from families was wonderful. The packs were greatly appreciated and brought moments of creativity, connection, and enjoyment to tamariki and whānau alike.

We are also looking forward to the students' support of our upcoming Street Appeal. Their willingness to give both their time and creativity reflects a genuine commitment to making a positive difference in their community.

Ngā mihi nui to everyone involved. Your generosity, thoughtfulness, and community spirit help strengthen connections, enhance mana, and bring joy to local tamariki and whānau.

Thank You Selwyn College

We are incredibly grateful to students, staff, and supporters for their commitment to standing alongside local tamariki and whānau. Through the Run for a Cause fundraiser, the Selwyn community raised more than $1,200 to help ensure families across Dunedin can access the support they need.



What began as a conversation with Special Character Scholars Fergus and Oliver, grew into a wonderful example of people coming together to make a meaningful difference. Your generosity, perseverance, and willingness to support others reflect the power of walking with our community.

Ngā mihi nui, Selwyn College. Thank you for helping create a stronger, more connected, and hopeful future for tamariki and whānau across Ōtepoti.





Bingo Night In Balclutha

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who helped make the Two Fat Ladies Bingo Night in Balclutha such a wonderful success. Together we raised over $1,700 for the South Otago OCEANS programme pilot.

We are incredibly grateful to our sponsors, Rosebank Lodge, Clutha Licensing Trust, and Unifone, whose generosity helped bring the event to life. We also acknowledge the ongoing funding support of Clutha Foundation and Otago Community Trust, along with the many individual donors who continue to back our work.

Together, your support is helping us raise vital funds for this programme, enabling us to walk alongside local people as they navigate grief, loss, and life-changing circumstances. Thank you for helping strengthen our South Otago community.

Grants Update

Thank you to **Pub Charity** for their generous grant of $5,000 towards the lease costs of our Dunedin premises. This funding helps ensure we can continue providing a welcoming and accessible space for tamariki, rangatahi and whānau across Otago. We are grateful for their support and commitment to strengthening local communities.

Kingston Sedgfield Charitable Trust for providing $3,500 supporting the delivering costs for our Home-based Family Support service across Otago, and Social Workers in Schools in 5 Dunedin schools. Their loyal support towards our mahi is always appreciated.

Our appreciation to **Waitaki Adult Learning Centre** for $1,800, supporting a professional development, so our North Otago team can undertake ‘Out of The Fog’ training, which will support maternal mental wellbeing in the community – a recognised gap in the area.

Special thanks to the **Lion Foundation** for generously providing a $22,500 grant towards lease costs for the Dunedin, Wānaka and Ōamaru offices.

And finally, the **Tindall Foundation**, administered through the Anglican Care Network for their $12,000 support towards the Oceans programme in North and South Otago.

We are fortunate to be supported by a community that believes in strengthening connections and helping whānau thrive. Through grants, donations, and gifts in kind, our supporters help ensure we can continue delivering essential services across Otago.

Every contribution, large or small, matters. We never take this support for granted and sincerely thank everyone who helps make our mahi possible.



Elisabeth Cunningham pictured with Bishop Steven Benford in 2024

Remembering Elisabeth Cunningham

On 14 September, Anglican Family Care lost a much loved and highly respected member of our wider whānau with the sudden passing of Elisabeth following an accident.

Elisabeth's connection with Anglican Family Care spanned many years and reflected her deep commitment to supporting tamariki, rangatahi, whānau, and communities across Otago. She served as a member of the Board of Trustees from 3 August 2006 until 1 October 2010, bringing thoughtful leadership, wisdom, and dedication to the governance of our organisation.

In March 2019, Elisabeth took on the role of Bishop's Delegate, a position she continued to hold until her death. Through this role, she remained a valued and engaged contributor to Anglican Family Care's mission and direction. Her insight, integrity, and steadfast support were greatly appreciated by trustees, staff, and volunteers alike.

Elisabeth's contribution to Anglican Family Care extended far beyond meetings and governance responsibilities. She was a person of faith, compassion, and service whose encouragement and genuine care for others left a lasting impression on those who worked alongside her. Her commitment to strengthening communities and supporting the wellbeing of others reflected the values at the heart of our organisation.

We acknowledge with gratitude Elisabeth's many years of service and her enduring contribution to Anglican Family Care. Her wisdom, kindness, and commitment to our mission will be remembered with deep appreciation. Our thoughts remain with her family and all those who knew and loved her.



Staff Updates

Farewelling Valued Colleagues

As part of Anglican Family Care's recent organisational restructure, we have farewelled two highly respected and longstanding members of our team.

Terri Goddard concluded an extraordinary 30 years of service with AFC. Throughout her career, Terri worked across a range of programmes including Social Workers in Schools, Home-based Family Support, Care and Therapeutic Services, and many others. Her dedication, expertise, and commitment to quality social work practice have made a lasting difference for countless tamariki, whānau, colleagues, and communities across Otago.

After 16 years with AFC, Ngarangi Matthews has also moved on to her next chapter. Beginning as a Whānau Worker before becoming Team Leader of Family Start, Ngarangi brought passion, leadership, and a deep commitment to intensive early intervention for whānau. She will be remembered for her unwavering focus on pēpi wellbeing and the support she provided to both families and colleagues.

We thank Terri and Ngarangi for their many years of service, leadership, and care, and wish them all the very best for the future.

Welcome Renee Lea

We are delighted to welcome Renee Lea as a Team Leader in our Dunedin team.

Renee brings more than 20 years of social work experience and a wealth of knowledge from across the social services sector. Her background includes work with Explore, Youth Specialty Service, and Oranga Tamariki, alongside extensive experience supporting neurodiverse young people and their whānau. Renee's expertise includes risk assessment, family based interventions, clinical supervision, service planning, and interagency collaboration. She is known for her positive approach, strong clinical skills, and genuine commitment to supporting tamariki, rangatahi, whānau, and fellow practitioners.

We are thrilled to have Renee join the AFC whānau and look forward to the experience, leadership, and enthusiasm she will bring to the team. Please join us in giving her a warm welcome.



Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting is an opportunity to gather as a community, hear about the impact of our collective mahi, connect with staff and supporters, and learn more about the work happening alongside tamariki, rangatahi, and whānau across Otago.

Thank you to everyone who attended our AGM on Wednesday 14 October.
If you were unable to attend, you can download our annual report by heading to our website www.anglicanfamilycare.org.nz/annual-reports/annual-report-2025-26



Help Create Christmas Memories

Christmas memories are often made in the small moments. The excitement of opening a gift. A new book read together. A game that brings the whole whānau around the table.

This year, we're inviting our community to help create those moments for local tamariki and rangatahi.

We're seeking donations of new gifts by 11 December to support children and young people connected with Anglican Family Care across Dunedin, Central Otago, North Otago, and South Otago.

Whether it's a toy, game, book, craft kit, sports item, or gift voucher, your generosity will help make Christmas brighter for local whānau and remind them that they are supported by their community.

Together, we can help make Christmas a little more joyful for tamariki across Otago. 🎄

To donate, visit:: www.anglicanfamilycare.org.nz/donate



A Few Hours. A Big Difference

Our annual Street Appeal is happening in Dunedin on Friday 27 November, and we're looking for volunteers to help us raise vital funds for tamariki, rangatahi, and whānau across Otago.

The appeal wraps up at 1pm, so even giving a couple of hours of your morning can make a meaningful difference. Every volunteer helps us connect with our community and raise funds that support local families when they need it most.

A few hours of your time could help change a child's story, strengthen a family's future, and inspire hope in our community.

Whether you can spare an hour, a morning, or stay until the end, we'd love to have you on board.

Can you help us make a difference on 27 November?
Contact us at Communication@FamilyCare.org.nz or by hitting completing the form on our website:
www.anglicanfamilycare.org.nz/available-positions/street-appeal-volunteer

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

Where To Find Us

Dunedin Office
266 Hanover Street, Dunedin Central
0800 FAM CARE 03 477 0801

North Otago Office
23 Coquet Street, Oamaru
0800 FAM CARE 03 434 1011

South Otago Office
Te Pou Ō Mata-Au, 6 Clyde Street
03 418 2530

Central Otago | Queenstown Lakes Office
Alexandra Community House
14-20 Centennial Ave, Alexandra
03 448 8228 (Alexandra)

Wanaka Community Hub,
34 McDougall Street, Wanaka
03 443 6623 (Wanaka)