



Thrive

whānau āwhina
plunket

Your impact on the future of New Zealand whānau

Autumn 2024

Kia ora



Mother's Day is fast approaching! This coming Sunday is a great opportunity to shower the māmā figures in our lives with love and appreciation – whoever they may be. We would like to pay tribute to them all, and the amazing role they play in bringing up the next generation.

Whānau Āwhina Plunket is fortunate to connect with mothers and their tamariki regularly through our healthcare programmes and community services. We would like to thank you, our generous supporters, for enabling us to forge relationships with a lot of incredible women. This allows us to continue helping families in many different ways – supporting them through the darker or tougher times of parenting, like in cases of infant loss or mental health struggles, and sharing in all the joys of raising children from babyhood to starting school.

In this issue of *Thrive*, we'll provide a rather exciting update on mum Kerra and her baby Isla, the family from our recent appeal that so many of you kindly donated to. I won't give away any more spoilers here! But I will say that I'm beyond grateful for your generosity. You have helped keep our support of mothers going strong.

We're also proud to spotlight our newly-opened Rotorua community hub. This facility has been years in the making, and truly only possible with the immense help of our donors. Thank you. Our Rotorua kaimahi have enjoyed hearing children's laughter in the halls and gardens of this stunning location, seeing new pēpi (babies), and watching mums connect over a well-earned cuppa in the open-plan spaces.

Please read on for lots of other notable updates around our people, like volunteer Ralph Vickers and long-standing staff member, Claire Henderson. And our partners, like BestStart Educare who ran another successful BestStart for Plunket Appeal recently. Their support, as well as yours, means that we can help whānau give every child the best possible start in life.

I can't wait to spend some uninterrupted time with my children this weekend, and I wish the same quality moments with whānau to you all, whatever shape your family may take. We have a little giveaway specially for you, our supporter community, further on in this newsletter to help make Mother's Day extra memorable this year.

Ngā mihi nui,

Fiona Kingsford, Chief Executive.



Your donations have helped us on the frontline

Thank you for your incredible support during our latest appeal. Your generosity means that experts like Nurse Gillian can keep seeing as many tamariki in the early years as possible, ensuring that children receive the care they need.

We were able to raise more than **\$95,000** over February and March. These funds go to filling the gaps in everything our Plunket nurses need for their important mahi across Aotearoa New Zealand and keeps our community support going in the form of playgroups and parent groups - wraparound care for the whole whānau.

The story of Isla and her hip dysplasia diagnosis struck a chord with many of our amazing donors. No parent wants to see their child go through anything medical; it's a scary, uncertain time. But early detection thanks to the eagle eye of Nurse Gillian meant that Isla was able to be fitted with a Pavlik harness and avoid invasive surgery. She was one of over 1,500 referrals for hip issues that we made in 2023, and thanks to you, we can keep doing so.

Isla is now 18 months old and doing fabulously well. Kerra was able to provide some rather exciting updates: not only is Isla walking and exploring her world confidently, but she's also going to be a big sister in the spring! A huge congratulations to Kerra, Mathew and Isla from Whānau Āwhina Plunket, and a resounding 'thank you!' to our donor community.



A new building means a new chapter for Plunket services in Rotorua

In February we officially finished our brand-new Rotorua community hub! After 10 years of work and hiccups (like a pandemic!) to plan, design and build, the doors of 1436 Pukuatua Street opened following a warm dawn karakia and blessing.

For generations, Plunket nurses and the wider team have walked alongside Rotorua whānau raising their tamariki. This facility brings all our support services under one roof. Plus, there is space for like-minded community providers who share our vision of supporting families in the crucial early years, so children in the region get the best possible start in life.

But as a charity, there is simply no way we could have ever got to this point of a beautiful hub in Rotorua without the donations we received from incredible supporters like you. A huge, special thanks must go to Generation Homes, Bay Trust, Rotorua Trust, New Zealand Lottery Grants Board, One Foundation, New Zealand Community Trust, Gallagher Insurance, Masfen Foundation, NXP, Plunket Foundation, Rotorua Rotary Club, Rotorua Racing Club, Rotorua Quota, Claymark, Placemakers Rotorua, Panasonic NZ and the many friends of Plunket who have held fundraising initiatives over the years - from degustation dinners to cake raffles.

Our first drop-in clinic was on Feb 1 at the new facility, and the first precious pēpi through was Modecai James, with proud parents Dallas James and Terina Tahuri. Dallas was also a builder on the project – a lovely full-circle moment for the family!

Since its opening, we have seen over 300 children and on drop-in clinic days our facility is being used to its full capacity. We are also running two important community services out of the hub – the Parents and Cubs group for caregivers and tamariki to interact, and a Parent Support Group for parents to connect

over a coffee or tea. The Rotorua hub is truly a space that allows local whānau to stay engaged and feel supported well beyond those early days with baby.



A green thumb and a passion for Plunket!

Supporters like you always blow us away with your generosity – including the giving of your time. Volunteers help keep our community services running, so that Plunket can help every whānau who needs us most. And in the case of Ralph Vickers, they also keep our properties up to scratch for visiting children and families.

Mr Vickers is retiring after an amazing 16 years of volunteering for Plunket! In that time, he could be found working in the garden of the Otumoetai clinic in Tauranga, rain or shine. He ensured that the grounds stayed pristine and weed-free for the local whānau and Plunket team. Now in his mid-eighties, he is ready to hang up his trowel.

Otumoetai kaimahi arranged a special morning tea for Mr Vickers and purchased a tree to be planted in his honour after so many years of commitment to the clinic. His daughter, Anna Martyn, who also attended the morning tea, was the former president of the Otumoetai Plunket clinic back in 2010.

“We are so thankful for Ralph’s many years of hard work and generosity,” says Community Karitāne, Raewyn Davies. “A Plunket baby himself, Ralph is passionate about the difference the organisation makes in the community. His dedication is appreciated not just by the staff that work in the clinic, but also the families that visit.”

Thank you, Ralph. And thanks as always to all of our fantastic volunteer whānau.



Ralph Vickers and his daughter, Anna Martyn

The BestStart for Plunket Appeal draws support for our services from across the motu

Our incredible Star Partner is **BestStart Educare**. We have been fortunate to work with BestStart since 2014, sharing a focus on helping tamariki and future generations to thrive.

BestStart has also shown its support for Whānau Āwhina Plunket and families in Aotearoa in a very special way – with their unique BestStart Plunket appeal. Their 260 centres are encouraged to sign up online and run exciting fundraising activities for their children, like teddy bear picnics and face painting, and engaging fundraising events for the caregivers and community, like auctions and bake sales.

We’re pleased to say that 2024 marks the 9th year that the BestStart Plunket appeal has been running, raising more than \$324,000 over the years!

This is an enormously valuable contribution to the running of our programmes and services for whānau nationwide.



BestStart Wainoni Road enjoying a visit from Fiona Kingsford last year following their fundraising success!



BestStart
Plunket
Appeal





A Mother's Day giveaway just for you!

To show a little extra appreciation for the māmā in our supporter community, we have a gorgeous pack of self-care and home care products to give away! Our partner, **Diplomat**, has generously put these together with favourite brands in there like Olay, Pantene and Gillette.

Simply reply to this email with a story about how Plunket helped you, or a loved one, as a new parent.

A big thank you to **Diplomat** for the Mother's Day giveaway, so we can show our gratitude to you, our donors!

Quick Plunket-wide updates on our people and programmes!

It was Plunketline's 30th Birthday in April!

In three decades we've received over 2.5 million calls, introduced the ability to hold video calls for successful, visual advice for lactation consultations and other important parenting tips, have been able to save whānau thousands of trips to afterhours care or, alternatively, suggested urgent medical attention when needed. PlunketLine has become a reliable, 24/7 resource for caregivers of tamariki across the country. And we thank our supportive donor community for helping us keep it running – for generations to come.

Our new Westgate hub opened up in March!

Conveniently located in the popular Westgate shopping centre, this hub replaces the former office on Enterprise Drive. A lovely dawn blessing ceremony was held with members of Ngāti Whatua o Kaipara iwi. Westgate is a fast-growing area of Auckland and the local team is so looking forward to serving whānau in a space that truly meets their needs.

In February, Claire Henderson, a proud māmā and Plunket nurse in the Rotorua region, retired after 30 years of mahi.

Claire had the honour of unveiling hand-crafted Māori tukutuku panels which are now proudly displayed in Plunket's newly-opened Rotorua community hub.

Says Claire:

"I know Whānau Āwhina Plunket is well-placed in Rotorua to now care for the next generations to come! A community hub like the new one we are lucky enough to have will ensure whānau and tamariki have the chance to thrive."



Calling all loyal Dunkers!

Thanks to our friends at Arnott's, *Dunk it for Plunket* is back for September this year!

All you have to do is register online, receive a 'Dunk Kit' box filled with the delicious goodies you'll need to host a yummy morning tea, then come together with your loved ones over a hot cuppa and bikkie (or three) to raise funds for Plunket.

Top tip: Sign up to become a *Dunk it for Plunket* VIP!

We're encouraging all of our loyal *Dunk it for Plunket* participants around New Zealand to become VIP Dunkers! VIP Dunkers are guaranteed a Dunk Kit if they've participated before. This year we're reaching more people and much earlier – so with a limited number of Dunk Kits to send out, becoming a VIP Dunker is a smart move!

Pictured above: Fiona Kingsford at her Dunk it for Plunket morning tea last year in the Wellington Plunket Support office.

Dunk it
for Plunket
So future generations can thrive

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whānau āwhina
plunket