



Volunteer News

Quarterly pānui – December 2025

Kia ora koutou

It's been an exciting year for Whānau Āwhina Plunket and I couldn't be prouder of our team who continue to support whānau and their tamariki and pēpi. We have delivered more clinical visits, taken more PlunketLine calls with our new virtual services in hot demand, and our community services teams, supported by our wonderful volunteers, have also delivered above and beyond.

In this issue we highlight Gore's first Super Saturday, held in October. The day was a success, thanks to the volunteers who made the day run smoothly. We also share some gorgeous knitting by a volunteer in Timaru, which is so appreciated by the whānau who receive it.



The importance of the work we do is highlighted in the story in our Christmas Appeal and in a personal client story we share in this issue. Both māmā found Plunket to be a safe space when they needed it and we are grateful to them for telling their story.

Thank you for being part of our tribe of volunteers and for donating your time and energy to support our services. We appreciate your mahi and support over this past year. We look forward to continuing our work together in 2026. Meri Kirihimete and we wish you all a safe and happy summer period!

Ngā mihi nui,

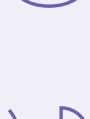
Fiona Kingsford, Chief Executive.



whānau āwhina
plunket

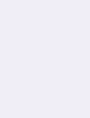
Our volunteer year in review

Volunteers are vital to our organisation. Thank you for your invaluable support that increases our capacity to deliver extra services for whānau.



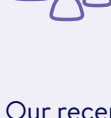
270,817

Number of tamariki on our books
(0-5 years)



45,463

New Whānau Āwhina Plunket babies
in 2024-25



90,000

Community service engagements to
support whānau

Our recent Annual Report 2024/2025 provides a great overview of our mahi from the past year. We share insights into our services and highlight stories from our clients and some of the achievements of our team.



707

Active volunteers



6,000

Hours of volunteer work



506

Whānau supported by volunteers through
our popular home visiting service

[Read our Annual Report](#)

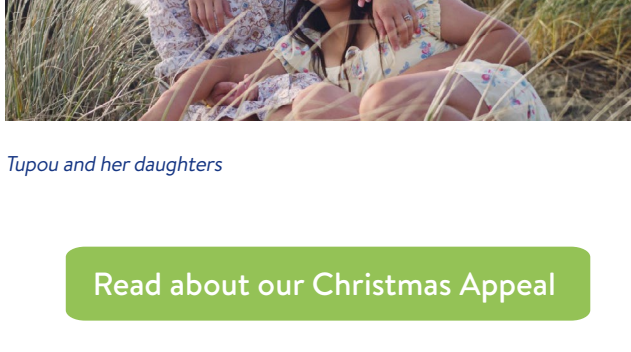


Christmas Appeal

Our appeal focuses on a young māmā, Tupou, who was struggling with her mental health. A Plunket nurse became the 'safe space' for her to open up.

"With my first daughter, I was so vigorous in her care. And after our second daughter, I was so into making sure they were okay. I'd get up every morning and focus on caring for them. But after we lost our third baby, I just lost that motivation. I was trying my best, but I just don't know where it went."

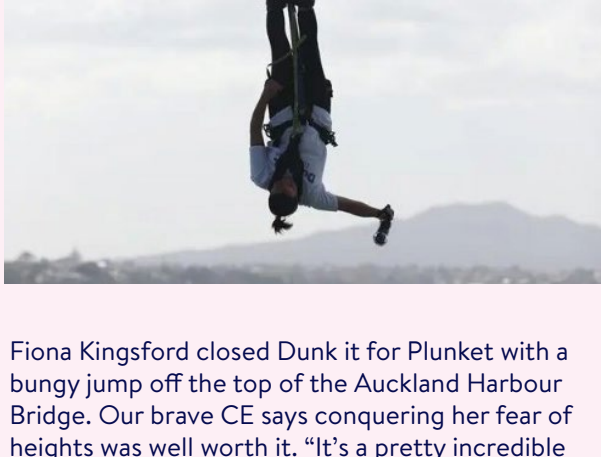
Plunket teams are often the only ones who see behind closed doors and they play a crucial role in supporting new parents. Tupou's Plunket nurse noticed that something was wrong and looking back, Tupou is grateful for the honesty and reassurance from her Plunket nurse.



Tupou and her daughters

[Read about our Christmas Appeal](#)

Taking fundraising to new heights



Fiona Kingsford closed Dunk it for Plunket with a bungee jump off the top of the Auckland Harbour Bridge. Our brave CE says conquering her fear of heights was well worth it. "It's a pretty incredible cause—keeping Plunket's services going strong so future generations can thrive. I made a commitment to doing the jump if I met my fundraising target of \$10,000—and we got there, so I had to follow through!" says Fiona.

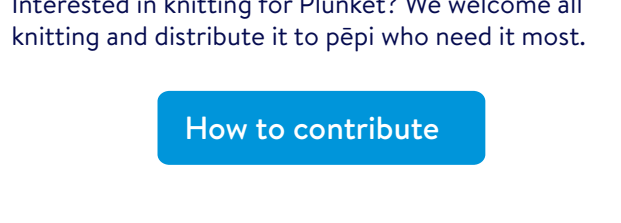
"As a charity, we simply could not do all the important mahi we do in our communities without the generosity of those who donate to us. A huge thank-you to everyone who has supported Plunket's annual appeal this year—especially those who helped me to reach my fundraising goal!"

[Watch Fiona's jump](#)

Thank you to our volunteers

This month we mark International Volunteer Day (5 December), and we want to give a huge thank you to our incredible volunteers who generously give their time, knowledge, skills and energy to support communities across the motu. We couldn't deliver our crucial community services without you!

Knit for Plunket

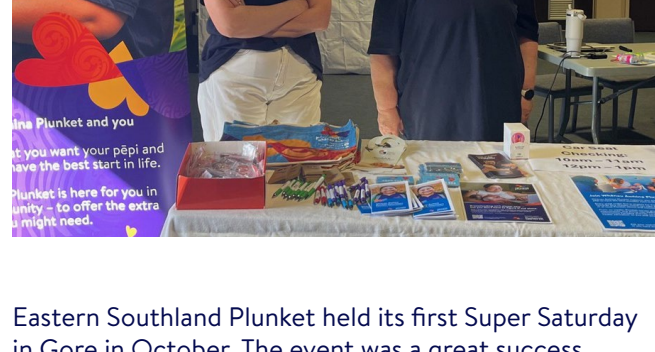


Our Whānau Āwhina Plunket volunteers support whānau in many ways, including as knitters! Liz Shea, one of our Timaru volunteers, knitted these gorgeous gingersnap cardigans to help keep tamariki warm. Thank you for your mahi!

Interested in knitting for Plunket? We welcome all knitting and distribute it to pēpi who need it most.

[How to contribute](#)

First Super Saturday for Gore



Eastern Southland Plunket held its first Super Saturday in Gore in October. The event was a great success, with more than 200 people attending. Families had access to services including Well Child Tamariki Ora checks, immunisations with Awarua Health, and injury prevention advice, alongside crafts, a bouncy castle and free pre-loved clothing.

Our team made meaningful connections with whānau. One mum received breastfeeding advice and started to build a relationship with her Plunket nurse ahead of her first scheduled appointment. And another young mum was introduced to the injury prevention team to ensure her baby was in the correct car seat for size.

Preventing measles in the community

Our childhood immunisation project with Health New Zealand has reached a major milestone, with all 24 pilot sites now open. Across the pilot so far, we have delivered more than 4,000 vaccinations, highlighting the impact of improving access in communities where immunisation rates are lowest. Stepping into this space has also enabled us to play a role in Aotearoa's recent measles response. We've been able to offer the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccinations to the whole whānau at all 24 clinics nationwide and delivered mobile and pop-up clinics in high-need areas. Uptake has been strong, especially with whānau Māori. It's been incredible to be involved in this significant and meaningful kaupapa.

Diwali Festival shines bright



In October, Whānau Āwhina Plunket marked its first-ever presence at the Auckland Diwali Festival. The event to celebrate the Indian festival of lights was a crucial step for Plunket in connecting with the region's large and growing Indian community. "Auckland has a significant population of Indian families, and it's essential that we are visible and accessible to them," said Vivian Cheung, Principal Advisor, Priority Populations. "Diwali provided the perfect opportunity to engage with parents and caregivers in a comfortable and celebratory setting."

A key element was having dedicated staff on hand who could speak a variety of South Asian languages. "This linguistic diversity helped break down communication barriers, ensuring families felt welcomed and understood. As almost half of Auckland's new baby cases are of Asian ethnicity, Plunket needs to actively engage with this growing community," said Sam Ferriera, Regional Operations Manager.

Some Plunket offices also held their own Diwali celebrations with whānau.

Round the Bays 2026

Are you ready to kick off 2026 with some fresh air, fun and feel-good vibes? Sign up for Round the Bays 2026 and fundraiser for Plunket. Boost your wellbeing with a fun fitness goal and help Plunket make a real difference for whānau in our community.

Sign up as a fundraiser:

Wellington | 15 February

Christchurch | 22 February

Auckland | 8 March



Toy safety week



Whānau Āwhina Plunket joined the first Toy Safety Week (20–26 October). This important campaign was about making safer choices when buying, storing, and supervising toys. "Play is essential for a child's development, but it should also be safe," said Kathryn Impelmans, Whānau Āwhina Plunket National Injury Prevention (Child Safety) Manager.

Toy tips for parents, caregivers and whānau

Follow these simple safety steps when buying or checking toys:

1. Size matters – Ensure toys are large enough to not be put in their mouth, ears or nose.
2. Surface check – Look for smooth finishes and avoid sharp edges.
3. String safety – Avoid toys with long cords or strings.
4. Supervision and safety instruction – Check packaging and know which toys need adult supervision.
5. Volume control – Make sure toys aren't too loud for little ears.
6. Swallow risk – Watch for small parts or items like button batteries that could be ingested.

Ngāti Hine Health Trust and Plunket Sign MoU

To strengthen a Māhōra-centred care across Te Tai Tokerau, we have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Ngāti Hine Health Trust, the region's largest hauora provider. The MoU is effective from 1 December 2025, and is grounded in equity, tino rangatiratanga and mokopuna futures.

"Both organisations share an important commitment – to nurture healthy pēpi and tamariki and support whānau in Te Tai Tokerau," Fiona Kingsford says.



Fiona Kingsford with Tamati Shepherd-Wipiti, Chief Executive Officer of Ngāti Hine Health Trust and trustee of the Royal New Zealand Plunket Board.



"You cannot put a value on support like this"



When first-time mum and new business owner Renee walked into Queenstown Plunket with her son, she was feeling overwhelmed. She knew that Plunket was a supportive place where she could be honest about her "mum experience".

Renee is now a regular at a Plunket playgroup. As a first-time mum living far from extended family, Renee says the value of a support network like Plunket can't be overstated.

"You cannot put a value on support like this. There is a lot for us mums to juggle, especially as a first-time mum running a business, with family in another country, it is invaluable to have a place that you can call on any time of day (and night) when you are in the thick of things and need some support."

Christmas baking

Tamariki will love these festive cookies. Depending on their age, they can measure and pour ingredients or get them involved in cutting out shapes and decorating. No Christmas cutters? Use a circle shape and decorate them like baubles.

[Check out the recipe on Kidspot](#)



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