



Volunteer News

Kia ora koutou

We love September here at Whānau Āwhina Plunket as it means both spring and Dunk it for Plunket are underway. Our biggest annual fundraiser provides lots of opportunities to meet for a cuppa and a dunk, and it inspires plenty of engagement around the country.

September is also Wills Month and we are so grateful to those who leave a gift in their will to the Plunket Foundation. We profile longstanding volunteer Jan Barton who is proud to share her motivations for including the Plunket Foundation in her will.



Quarterly pānui – September 2025

We also thank our star partner BestStart for their support of Plunket, share the story of a new māmā who was helped by PlunketLine's free lactation consultants, and we highlight some Plunket volunteers who run what has been described as a "real hidden gem".

We hope you enjoy this edition of Volunteer News.

Ngā mihi nui,

Fiona Kingsford, Chief Executive.



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Volunteers of the Year host 'a real hidden gem'



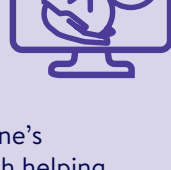
Volunteers of the Year Alison and Carol

Plunket volunteers Alison McTaggart and Carol Harvey provide warmth, dignity, community and connection to whānau with young children. Through the Clothing Swap Shop, which operates out of the West Auckland Family Centre, Alison and Carol carefully curate donated items for newborns and children up to five years, and welcome families with kind smiles and helping hands.

Alison and Carol were jointly awarded 'Volunteer of the Year', as part of the Northern region's celebrations for National Volunteer week. Between them, Alison and Carol have 20 years' experience as Plunket volunteers, pouring their time, energy and hearts into supporting families in the community.

A story Alison shared highlights their impact: "A mother had been coming in for a few weeks. She told me she found herself driving to the Family Centre every Wednesday, even when she didn't have much money, because she loved the feeling of being able to browse, to shop—even if it was just 50 cents an item. It made her feel like a mum who could provide."

Plunket lactation consultant gave Adithya hope



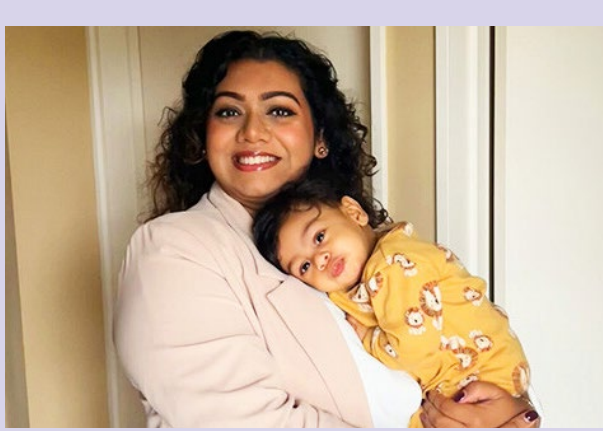
New māmā Adithya credits PlunketLine's free lactation video consultations with helping her overcome a stressful start to her breastfeeding journey.

"I had a complication post-delivery, which meant that I struggled with milk supply and I couldn't feed my baby properly. Not being able to breastfeed suddenly was really emotionally devastating. It felt like something had been taken away from me," she says.

"We used Plunket's [virtual lactation consultant](#) service and the fact that I could stay home and still access the support I was so desperate for, made all the difference. It was exactly what I needed, when I needed it. I was in such a physically and mentally fragile state that if getting help had been even slightly harder, I honestly think I would've given up."

Adithya says lactation consultant Lindsay took the time to really listen to her journey. "She was patient, warm and non-judgmental."

"Nothing Lindsay suggested was a quick fix and she was honest about that. She made it clear that finding my way back wouldn't be easy. But for the first time since giving birth, someone offered me hope. And that made all the difference because it gave me something to fight for."



Adithya and pēpi

Dunk it for Plunket

Dunk it for Plunket month is here! From dunk tanks to dunking biscuits, we've seen amazing fundraising action across the country in support of tamariki and whānau.

Our amazing partner of over 30 years, Huggies, is making this month even bigger with a Double Dunk Match Fund! Beginning on 10 September, Huggies is matching all \$20,000. For a limited time, every dollar donated goes twice as far!

Will you help spread the word? Follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) to share our *Dunk it for Plunket* updates—every post and every donation helps Plunket support whānau when they need us most.

Reach out to Jo Bailey, our Community and Events Fundraising Specialist, with any Dunk it for Plunket questions or ideas.



Email Jo Bailey



Committed to culturally responsive care

In June, we signed Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) with [The Asian Network Incorporated](#) (TANI) and [CNSST Foundation](#) during ceremonies in Tāmaki Makaurau, Auckland. These partnerships signal our commitment to health equity and cultural inclusion. Partnering with these organisations will enable us to work more closely with Asian communities across Auckland to better support whānau.

"Aotearoa New Zealand's Asian population is growing fast and often families have specific needs in order to thrive. We are working hard to ensure equitable access to the services we provide, tailoring them to meet their unique cultural, social and health requirements," says Fiona Kingsford.



Culturally responsive care: Fiona Kingsford with Jenny Wang, CNSST Foundation Executive Director

BestStart raises \$91,000

BestStart early childhood education centres around the country have raised a total of \$91,000 to support Whānau Āwhina Plunket, thanks to their 2025 BestStart Butterfly Appeal. Thank you to BestStart! The money helps us deliver free community services for families, including home visits, new parent groups and parenting programmes.

"This is the tenth year that BestStart have supported us with this amazing appeal—and they generated a record-breaking total this year—we are so grateful for their efforts," says Fiona Kingsford.

Over the past ten years, BestStart centres around the country have raised an incredible \$483,000 to support Whānau Āwhina Plunket's community services, Fiona says.

"BestStart and Plunket are both committed to making a positive difference in the lives of tamariki and their whānau. Our butterfly logo symbolises growth, care and transformation; values shared by both organisations."



A BestStart pupil shares her BestStart Butterfly Appeal artwork



A longstanding volunteer makes a lasting difference



Jan Barton

September is Wills Month in Aotearoa, and longstanding volunteer Jan Barton is proud to share her motivations for including the Plunket Foundation in her will.

Plunket has played an important role in Jan's life, right from the start. Some of Jan's earliest memories include walking to the local Plunket rooms with her mum, and 'playing Plunket' with dolls in her front yard. Later, as a young mum raising three children in rural Auckland in the 1960s, Jan relied on her Plunket nurse for practical advice and reassurance.

Like many in her community, Jan joined her local Plunket committee, beginning a volunteer journey that spanned nearly 40 years.

Jan says, "I have decided to leave a gift in my will to Plunket because it will be my final contribution to the cause that I have given to all my life."

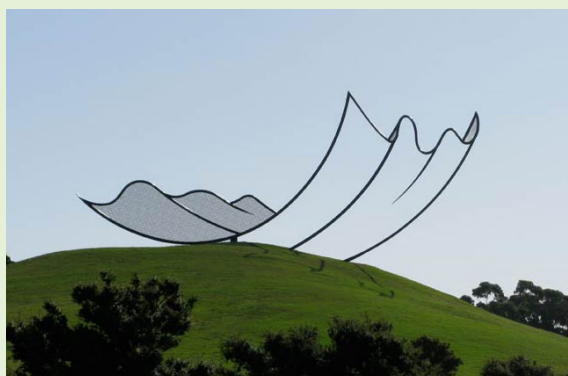
Read Jan's story

Gibbs Farm Plunket experience

Gibbs Farm is a unique place for a stunning sculpture collection. Located on an expansive farm overlooking the breathtaking Kaipara Harbour, rolling green hills and beautiful views combine with one-of-a-kind artworks for a truly memorable experience.

We are hosting a Gibbs Farm Plunket experience on 20 November, including a catered lunch. Wander about giant works of art and share a bite with friendly Plunket Community Services kaimahi. Each ticket sold helps support our vital services so little lives can thrive.

Just 200 tickets are available, so get yours today!



Neil Dawson's 'Horizons' sculpture at Gibbs Farm.

Buy a ticket

August was Money Month!



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Insurance Mortgage Lenders

Wellbeing comes in many forms—and financial security is a big one. Whānau Āwhina Plunket and Haven Financial both believe every family deserves a brighter future and our partnership is here to help you through life's biggest moments.

All Plunket volunteers have access to a free financial wellbeing check with a friendly Haven adviser. Whether you're planning for your first or bigger home, wanting to protect your growing family, or securing a comfortable retirement. Get expert advice on insurance, KiwiSaver and mortgages.

Book your free financial wellbeing check with one of their friendly advisers and you'll also receive a free Will Kit to get you started.

Learn more

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please let us know by emailing annalee.hayward@plunket.org.nz



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