

Volunteer News

Quarterly pānui - March 2024

whānau āwhina
plunket

Kia ora koutou

It is my pleasure to be sending you – our amazing volunteers – my first of what will be regular updates on all the wonderful mahi happening at Whānau Āwhina Plunket.

It is very special for me to hold this role as Chief Executive of Whānau Āwhina Plunket. Plunket is in my DNA. I was a Plunket baby, a Plunket mum and on our local Plunket committee when my children were young.

Plunket has been in our communities for more than a century. The world has changed a lot in that time, and we've adapted and changed to suit the needs of whānau we support. We'll continue to do that.

The faces may change over the years, but our commitment to supporting the health and wellbeing of tamariki under-five and their whānau won't. They are at the heart of everything we do.

The other thing that never changes is our reliance on volunteers like you who share our vision. We quite simply could not do what we do without you.

I'm delighted to share with you some latest news from the north to the south, including the opening of our beautiful new community hub in Rotorua which has been 10 years in the making and a successful Southern Field Days event in Gore, where Plunket came together with other services to support local whānau.

Ngā mihi nui,



Fiona Kingsford, Chief Executive.



Our latest Annual Report
is now online.

Check out plunket.org.nz
and search Annual Report.
It's full of interesting stories
of the mahi we do.

Connecting our communities

We are so proud of the important role we play in connecting communities through Plunket in the Neighbourhood (PIN) groups. PIN groups play a vital role in providing a place for whānau to thrive and flourish.

It was really special to have 21 new pēpi along with their māmā and caregivers at our Napier Plunket, exactly a year since Cyclone Gabrielle ravaged the East Coast.

Community Support Coordinator Amy Orr says it's been a journey to get to this happy place, but the whānau here symbolise new life and new beginnings.

And we couldn't do this without you – our volunteers. Thank you!



He huanui oranga mo ngā mokopuna whakatipuranga roto i ngā hapori heke iho, heke iho
Setting the path of wellness in our communities for the early years, for generations to come

A focus on our volunteers

Celebrating 52 years of service

Long-time volunteer Mary Hall was celebrated at the Sandringham Plunket Clinic for an incredible 52 years of service to Whānau Āwhina Plunket.

Mary has helped many whānau to keep their children and babies safe and well over the years. She's an inspiration to us all and we are very lucky to have her.

A much-loved face in the popular Sandringham Plunket Clinic, Mary ensures the smooth running of many services. She's kept busy managing birthday party bookings for the clinic's venue hire service, installing car seats for whānau, conducting safety checks on nursery furniture and providing event support.

Beginning her volunteering journey with Plunket back in 1971, Mary has held various roles from local committee to area positions. She was well-known as the Branch Safety Officer in the 1980s and then Area Safety Officer in the early 2000s, where she specialised in child safety and represented Plunket at many advisory groups and networks.

Mary has received awards for her long service, including an honorary life membership with Plunket. In 2004, she was named Aucklander of the Year and in 2014, was recognised during the Minister of Health Volunteer Awards for her commitment to the health field.

There are no plans to slow down any time soon for Mary.

"Volunteering with Plunket is a big part of my life. It's just what I do. I enjoy being a part of the local community and helping the staff do their jobs," she says.



Mary Hall (centre) with Community Services Manager Clare Green and Community Services Team Leader Francois Kayembe

A green thumb and a passion for Plunket

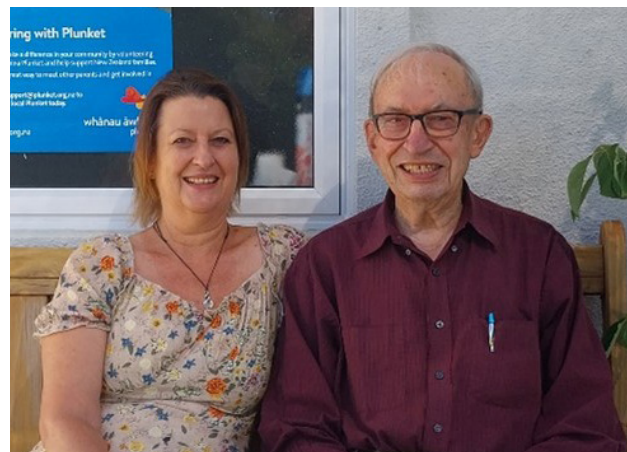
Whānau Āwhina Plunket kaimahi at the Otumoetai clinic in Tauranga farewellled local resident Ralph Vickers, who is retiring after more than 16 years of volunteering for the organisation.

Mr Vickers could be found rain or shine working in the clinic garden every Thursday, ensuring the grounds stayed pristine and weed-free. Now at the age of 85, he's decided it's time to hang up his trowel.

Otumoetai kaimahi arranged a morning tea for Mr Vickers and purchased a tree which will be planted to honour his many years of commitment. Also in attendance was his daughter Anna Martyn, 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 whānau that visit."



Ralph Vickers and his daughter Anna Martyn

Thank you to our knitters

We are so appreciative of our knitters who dedicate their time to ensuring our pēpi stay cosy and warm – especially during our chilly winter months.

Every lovingly crafted piece you donate supports a child in getting the best possible start to life.



Other volunteer news



Our new community hub in Rotorua

We are delighted to be welcoming whānau into our new Rotorua community hub Ria Mere – Mauri Tū Mauri Hono. You can read more in our [media release](#).

We are so grateful to everyone who supported us in bringing this dream to life, especially our builder Generation Homes NZ.

Breakfast TV came along too – [check out this awesome story](#) featuring our very first pēpi!



Southern Field Days

It was such a pleasure to be at Southern Field Days spending time with some of our rural community.

We shared a space with Road Safety Southland, Infa Group and the NZ Police, with the theme 'Get Home Safe' sharing safety messages around safe car seat practices.

With a record crowd of 42,000 over the three days, it was a really valuable and busy time.



National Injury Prevention Manager Kathryn Impelmans with her granddaughter

Plunket Appeal time!

Our latest major appeal focuses on māmā Kerra and her baby girl, Isla.

Isla's hip dysplasia was diagnosed early on, thanks to a quick and expert observation from Plunket nurse, Gillian.

Nurse Gillian immediately referred Isla to the family GP, one of around 1,500 referrals for hip issues that Plunket makes each year.

Isla was fitted with a Pavlik harness to correct the hip issue, rather than face the daunting and invasive alternative of surgery.

[Read more](#) about Kerra and Isla's story.



Māmā Kerra and her daughter Isla



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