



Presbyterian  
Support

Otago



March 2016

# FOREVER BUDDIES

*“Bayli will always be my buddy, even when he’s 30 years old,” says Adrienne. Bayli smiles.*

For North Otago Buddy Programme Co-ordinator Christine Moffat, that positive interaction between a volunteer and her Young Buddy summed up the mentoring programme perfectly.

“To hear Bayli and his Adult Buddy, Adrienne, reminisce about their nine years together in the programme, brought home to me the impact a volunteer has in preparing a child for the future,” Christine says.

Bayli’s mother is equally impressed, saying Adrienne’s reliability and her ability to introduce him to new people and places has been “life-changing.”

Now Bayli is 17 years of age the formal buddy relationship ends, but it’s a friendship both he and Adrienne believe will continue long into the future.

“Looking back I can see just how important it is to have someone to talk to. I remember people thinking our relationship wouldn’t last long and that as a boy I would be better off with a male buddy, but I didn’t mind. Adrienne’s definitely taught me to be more confident, and now I feel much better



*In a reversal of the mentoring role, Bayli helps Adrienne with her computer skills.*

when interacting with different people,” says Bayli.

The pair encourage people throughout Otago to become a buddy to a local child. Currently Buddy coordinators have over 50 children waiting for a Buddy; Oamaru with the longest list of 21 children.

Adult Buddies are quick to mention just how much they enjoy the connection.

“We’ve had an excellent time together. We’ve chatted away while picking buckets

of daffodils to give local rest homes, screamed our way around a roller coaster, and Bayli even helped me host Iona residents when they visited my garden,” says Adrienne. “I’ve seen him grow into a helpful and considerate young man who interacts well with others.

“Being an Adult Buddy is not difficult. It’s only a two-hour commitment each week, and if I want to go away for a weekend I do. At other times I continue during the school holidays. Others may do it differently, but in essence you make it work for you and your circumstances”, she adds.

If you want to make a positive difference in a child’s life, consider becoming an Adult Buddy. Contact Michelle on 477 7115 or visit [psotago.org.nz](http://psotago.org.nz)

Buddy Programme evaluation report on page 2.

## 110 YEARS

2016 marks Presbyterian Support Otago’s 110th year of service in the Otago community. Much has changed in that time but our vision for a fair, just and caring community remains the same. To see our current breadth of services, visit our new website at [psotago.org.nz](http://psotago.org.nz) and follow us on Facebook.

# BUDDY PROGRAMME IMPRESSES

As they say, the proof is in the pudding, and that's certainly the case in the Buddy Programme evaluation report released prior to Christmas.

Presbyterian Support Otago Chief Executive Gillian Bremner says individual interviews built into the evaluation process demonstrate the positive impact Adult Buddies have on the children they mentor.

"Giving young people the opportunity to spend time with an adult outside of their family, someone who has positive regard for them and shows interest in their lives, helps build confidence and presents new experiences.

"I was absolutely delighted to read the evaluation and see just what a huge

difference the Buddy Programme makes on everyone involved," Gillian says.

Here are some Young Buddy quotes from the research:

"I imagined it being similar to doing things with my dad, which is usually quite anxious, [but] it was quite different. It wasn't a stressful environment. It was very welcoming."

"You would forget about the bad things."

"I wasn't so angry. I was able to be happy rather than down in the dumps."

"[I] feel quite grateful to have had him in my life, even if it was such a short time.

I don't think I would've been exactly the same if I hadn't known him."

"Good memories made amongst a not so nice upbringing."

And for Adult Buddies too, the partnerships were rewarding:

"You can make such a difference to a wee life and get such warm feelings yourself as well."

"It's nice to feel you've made a direct impact on someone."

"They made up for my grandchildren who weren't around."

"It exposes the young buddies to another life; [gives] confidence in practical skills and believing in themselves."

# ENLIVEN

*Presbyterian Support Otago has re-named our services for older people "Enliven". Our community-based, retirement and residential aged care services now fall under this new national brand.*

Enliven may be a familiar name to you. It is the brand under which Presbyterian Support Otago delivers community-based services. It is the brand used by our sister Presbyterian Support agencies for older persons' services in other parts of New Zealand.

By changing our service name to Enliven, we seek to build awareness of the service philosophy that guides all our work with

## THE ENLIVEN SERVICE PHILOSOPHY:

**Some things make for healthier, happier living, no matter what your age. A sense of community; friends, family, whānau; giving and receiving; making decisions for yourself; and, most of all, practical support when you need it. At Enliven we work alongside you and your family to achieve these things.**

older people in the community. We are not changing the high standard of care and support provided by our staff and volunteers, just the way we talk about it.

To better communicate the Enliven service philosophy, you will start to see new images, language, logo and design elements in our printed materials and website. The colours are fresh, the images real and the style more contemporary.

We are very excited by these changes and feel strongly that they better reflect the quality and care with which our staff and volunteers work with senior members of our community.

[psotago.org.nz/enliven](http://psotago.org.nz/enliven)





# HEAD IN HANDS



*Cathy's stomach does a nervous flip when she reads her son's school stationery list. She then looks at her daughter's college list, and puts her head in her hands in despair.*

Cathy is not alone. According to Family Works social workers throughout Otago, the majority of their clients hit the wall financially, emotionally and mentally at this time of year.

"Usually the costs associated with Christmas are still being dealt with when the reality hits that school expenses also have to be faced," says Family Works Social Work Supervisor Deb Gelling.

"If you look at state school fees, uniforms, stationery, camp and sport's costs ranging from about \$1800\* for primary and over \$3000\* for secondary

students annually, you can soon see why parents despair. Now we have schools requiring each student to have their own laptop, and they're not cheap."

Family Works' Rural Practice Manager, Rachel McAnally agrees.

"No matter what their income is, parents want the very best for their children, but for those on low incomes it's accompanied by high stress levels too. In rural Otago, parents have to add the cost of transport into the mix, not just for school but for sport and cultural events as well," she adds.

"Sport, culture and camp fees should not be seen as luxuries because they help create healthy, engaged children who learn the values of teamwork, responsibility and positive behaviour. But unfortunately, for many parents, they are luxuries because to fund them is at the expense of food on the table."

Families on benefits may be able to borrow funds from Work and Income

New Zealand, but borrowing means paying the loan back, and that itself creates on-going problems, according to our social workers.

"This time of year is especially stressful for parents on minimum wages who are not eligible for WINZ support," says Deb Gelling. "The inability to fund school activities weighs heavily on families, and that can lead to emotional stress, depression or even violence, which affects every member of the family."

"It can take clients a few months of drip-feeding to clear school accounts, so by providing them with budgeting advice and food parcels we make a positive impact on the situation," she adds.

You can help children and families in need in your area by completing the coupon, page 7, or donating online at [psotago.org.nz](http://psotago.org.nz)

\* (Source ASG Education Cost Estimates 2015)



PeOPLE

# STARTING OVER

*Family Works Social Worker Jan Hughes catches up with Jodi and hears of her progress.*

## *Family Works staff support women released from New Zealand prisons to settle back into the community.*

For the Otago region, Christchurch Women's is the predominant release prison, but there are other women from around New Zealand who choose to come to Otago make a new start. Out of Gate is a programme designed for women who have served a short sentence (under two years) and who believe with the right support, they are very likely to remain out of prison.

The first few months following a short prison sentence can be very difficult for women. With no job, often damaged or broken family relationships and frequently no place to live, a return to old ways, or an unsafe relationship is a risk. The Out of Gate programme, funded by the Department of Corrections, aims to reduce the risk of re-offending by supporting women at this critical time.

In Otago, the Family Works team is currently working with 11 Out of Gate clients, one in Oamaru and 10 in Dunedin.

One of the women we are supporting is Jodi (29), a young mum from Gore. She left school and home at 15, and had her first child, a baby girl, at 16. She was a hard working young woman, juggling three part-time jobs and a growing family. Her first job was as a dish hand in a popular café in Gore. Proving herself a hard worker and quick learner, by the age of 20 she was the bar manager and sous chef. A job she loved.

Jodi's world fell apart in 2012. In a volatile relationship she describes as involving "a lot of yelling", and interactions with Child Youth and Family, resulted in her children being removed from her care. At only 24 she felt as though her life had ended. It was a heartbreak that seemed too much to bear. Feeling angry, deeply sad, let down by her community, and completely alone, she attempted to take her own life. Then she turned to drugs.

Drug dealers prey on vulnerable women like Jodi. The first "hit" is often a gift, to secure a new "customer".

"My dealer would take me shopping" says Jodi. By this she means her dealer would take her to a department store, where she would shoplift goods, handing them all to the dealer in exchange for drugs.

The shoplifting led to a prison sentence in 2014. And another in 2015 after refusing any help following her first release. Jodi didn't make the mistake of refusing help twice. Prior to release in September 2015, she registered for the Out of Gate programme and was put in touch with Elsie Freeman at our Family Works' Dunedin office.

"When I left prison all I had was what I could carry in one bag", says Jodi. "Elsie met me at the bus stop in Dunedin. She gave me a big hug and took me to my new home. There was some food in the cupboard, shampoo and conditioner in the shower and fresh sheets on the bed. She made it real nice for me. It was 9pm and she sat on the back step with me, had a cup of tea, and told me that if I



needed anything, at any time, I could call her", she said.

"If it weren't for Family Works and Elsie, I would probably be on the couch of some drug user falling back into my old life"

Jodi feels positive about the future. She attends weekly rehabilitation sessions, is enrolled in Open Polytechnic's "Get Ahead" skills programme, and has two close friends to support her.

She would like to train to become a social worker one day.

"I'd like to set up a programme for teenage mums and dads to help them stay in school and learn life skills too. There's not enough help for young parents, especially in rural areas," she says.

"I'd like my life to be good enough for my kids to live with me again" she concludes.

Elsie and the Family Works team are very proud of Jodi's progress and commitment to changing her life's course. Jodi sees sharing her story as part of that change. It's not easy starting over and Family Works will support her for as long as it takes.

# SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND PARENTS IN CENTRAL OTAGO



*Two highly successful group programmes will be held by Family Works in Central Otago this year.*

Incredible Years, a 14-week programme for parents wanting to strengthen

parent-child interactions and support the child's role within the family, starts in Wanaka this month.

In Cromwell, children needing to build up resilience and emotional control skills can do so next school term when the Growing Taller programme is held.

Information about these programmes can be found on [psotago.org.nz](http://psotago.org.nz)

## THANK YOU

for your contribution to our biggest fundraising appeal of the year, the Give a Lasting Smile Campaign. Last Christmas more than 3,200 gifts and toys and 22,000 food items were donated. These items were distributed to more than 600 families, including those supported by the combined Dunedin Foodbanks. We also received over \$63,000 in donated funds that will help us provide support to people in Otago in the months ahead.

## FAMILY WORKS'

foodbank fundraiser, Barbara Rowe (aka The Linen Lady), is again on the hunt for donations of vintage linen. Barbara and her helpers clean and repair old linen then sell it on-line to buyers who treasure the hand-stitched cloths and crochet doilies. So far they have raised nearly \$20,000. Barbara says she receives better prices when the linen is sold with its history attached, so if you have any vintage pieces you no longer want, please ring Barbara on Dunedin 453 5882 and tell her your personal story behind the piece you are donating.

## HOLMDENE

in Balclutha, has received its second much-prized four year certification from the Ministry of Health. That again puts it in the top 10% of New Zealand care homes. Presbyterian Support's Enliven staff and volunteers going the extra mile to ensure residents live fulfilling and supportive lives has auditors citing it as the ideal model for other providers to aim for.

*"The staff are wonderful, I wish I'd moved here sooner"*

*resident, Holmdene.*

## WHERE THERE'S A WILL THERE'S A WAY

*The abundance of natural light, spacious rooms and ensuites, soothing décor and an easy indoor-outdoor flow from almost every room has residents likening the Kirkness Unit at Iona, Oamaru, to living in a top class motel.*

"I moved from the old Kirkness into the new and it's just so nice, especially having the big door out into the courtyard," says resident Mrs Elaine Church.

Iona Manager Steph Leith said residents really enjoy the light and spaciousness created by the modern, practical layout.

"Residents can have more of their personal belongings in their rooms and staff have more space to manoeuvre equipment like hoists and recliner chairs around without having to shuffle

furniture about," she said. "It makes supporting residents much simpler".

Iona was built in 1953 and, has been updated over the years. The extension of the Kirkness Unit, completed in 2013, was made possible by the thoughtful generosity of people naming Presbyterian Support Otago in their wills. Without their collective support, and that of other donors, the development would have been either long delayed, or far more modest.

The Kirkness Unit provides 27 residents with hospital level care in a comfortable, serene environment.

"It's a first-class building conducive to providing first-class care and comfort to people in their latter years.

"There is a growing demand for hospital-level care services throughout New Zealand and I am proud we can offer local residents a facility that can stand alongside those provided in bigger cities," Stephenie adds. "And it's all thanks to the generosity of people in our community. I can't think of a better

improvement than seeing the delight in our residents' faces."

A gift from a will or estate can make a lasting difference to people in our community. Kirkness was built in 2013, and still gives great pleasure and comfort to older people in our community. It will do so for some time yet.

Is Presbyterian Support Otago already in your will, trust or other estate plans? Thank you! Please let us know about your plans because it helps us plan for the future. Call Michelle Gerwitz, 03 477 7115, and she will add your name to our legacy circle. Your gift may remain anonymous, if you like.

Don't have a will? You're not alone! Now is a great time to start planning, and please consider including a gift to Presbyterian Support Otago in your estate plans. Contact our Field Officer, Richard, on 029 1200 132, for a private conversation.

More information at [psotago.org.nz](http://psotago.org.nz)







Kelsey graduated from YouthGrow in December and is now studying for a Certificate in Horticulture at Otago Polytechnic. She also volunteers on Saturdays at the Otago Farmers Market YouthGrow stall. Kelsey is quick to tell you that without YouthGrow she wouldn't be on this positive path in her life.

# SUCCESS ENGAGING YOUNG ADULTS

*It's not easy engaging with young adults who find traditional schooling too hard to deal with. Attitudes and habits have been set, and respect for education and those providing it have long gone.*

But there is one Dunedin programme making a big difference for its students, as a recent evaluation has proven. It's the Family Works YouthGrow programme in Dunedin.

YouthGrow's life ready- work ready strategy helps disengaged youth identify what they really want for their future, and what they need to do to achieve their goals. This is done within the YouthGrow Garden Centre setting; an environment where hands-on is the key to providing literacy, numeracy and horticultural education alongside learning life skills. It's a true wrap-around service.

The evaluation report is rich in direct quotes from current and former students, revealing the value of the programme.

"It's not just a course, it's a family, a team," says one student, "The staff really make you want to turn up because they really do want the best for you."

Another added, "It made me feel human again and helped me to get a job."

Finding employment is the main goal for some students; others want to learn skills so they can advance to further education, in horticulture or other fields of interest.

Funding YouthGrow is a continual challenge, mainly because of the intense one-on-one support students require, especially when initially adapting to rules and routines. YouthGrow Garden Centre customers support the programme through their plant purchases. You can support the 2016 programme by ticking 'Youth Grow' on the attached form, or donate online at [psotago.org.nz](http://psotago.org.nz)

## YES! I WANT TO HELP VULNERABLE FAMILIES IN OTAGO.

Please tick

- ☐ By becoming a Guardian Angel at \$30 a month
- ☐ By supporting Family Works' responsive services
- ☐ By supporting the Buddy Programme
- ☐ By supporting YouthGrow

My gift is

\$

- ☐ I have left a gift to PSO in my will
- ☐ I would like more information about leaving a gift in my will

Please tick payment method

Cheque ☐ Credit Card ☐  
Internet Banking ☐

Card number



Name on card

Expiry Date

Signature

Internet Banking PSO Account Number:  
06 0901 0005597 00

My Contact details are

Name

Address

Phone

Email

Please return this form to:

Fundraising Team  
Presbyterian Support Otago  
FREEPOST 845  
PO Box 374, Dunedin 9054

(All donations are receipted. Gifts over \$5.00 are tax deductible. Charities Commission number CC 20878)

## OAMARU'S NEW STARTS

*New starts in life are meant to be positive moves, but for many Family Works' clients in North Otago that is not the case.*

Unable to pay Oamaru's increasing rents, low-income and non-working families are settling in satellite communities outside of town, which at first glance seems a sensible thing to do.

However, when they realise there is no public transport and their household budget doesn't stretch to running a vehicle, that new start isn't so rosy.

"The same struggles they've always had in making ends meet suddenly become very serious, which, in turn, means more complex needs requiring more time and energy on the part of our social worker," says Rachel McAnally, Family Works Rural Practice Manager.

"When someone's in survival mode they can't think long-term, and if there are physical and mental disabilities, as there often are, then the situation becomes a whole lot more difficult.

"Most of our new clients face issues that seriously affect how their families' function, consequently, the support we provide is wide and varied. It's certainly not easy, but with the backing of volunteers and donors we know we make a difference," Rachel adds.

**ALL ABOARD THE  
Taieri Gorge Rail Walk**  
Sunday 1st May 2016

In partnership with the Lions Club of Dunedin South, Presbyterian Support Otago is hosting a unique opportunity to explore the historic and spectacular Taieri Gorge. Mark Sunday 1st May 2016 on your calendar and do not miss this wonderful opportunity to explore the Taieri via rail and on foot covering bridges, tunnels, viaducts and historic sites.

Bookings and information  
**dunedinrailways.co.nz**

Presbyterian Support Otago works for a fair, just and caring community.