



“Family Works’ support has been life-changing for me.”

Angel NEWS

WINTER 2015

FREEDOM FROM BULLYING

Riria fell apart when two of her young children were taken from her by her ex-partner and his family. She couldn’t see her boys, aged 7 and 9, for six months.

“I felt like they had died. It was very traumatic.”

Frantic for some support, Riria eventually stumbled upon Family Works. Her family worker listened and stood by her as she worked through the process of getting her children back.

Through counselling and the opportunity to meet other women affected by violence, Riria learnt to recognise the patterns of abuse in her relationships. Brought up in a violent home herself, she saw that she often tried to keep people happy, no matter how controlling they were.

“It revealed to me how I allowed myself to be bullied and abused. I was the weak link in the chain.”

Riria’s ex-partner yelled at her and insulted her in front of the children. He refused to attend family mediation or cooperate over parenting arrangements. It took a long time

for Riria to realise that such behaviour was not OK. Family Works gave her the strength to stand up to the bullying and reclaim her children.

Riria is now married to a supportive man she describes as the “strength and rock” of her blended family and she’s determined to show her children a healthier, safer way to live – without violence.

“I’ve learnt that I do not deserve for anyone to exert power over me without my permission. You don’t have to accept that kind of treatment from bullies, no matter who they are.”

Your gifts have helped Riria and many more families like hers to get the social services support they need. We appreciate the way you trust us to extend a helping hand to those most vulnerable in your community.



ANTI-VIOLENCE MESSAGE SPREADS

The message that family violence is not OK is taking hold throughout the Bay of Plenty, with the hardworking support of Family Works social workers in schools and family violence response coordinators.

Papamoa has adopted the "It's Not OK" message as a whole community. Everyone from surf lifesavers to businesses is on board, including the local fish and chip shop which has a sign: "We batter our fish, not our women."

Be encouraged that your support doesn't just provide bottom-of-the-cliff services for victims of family violence. It focuses on generations of future parents to help them learn the habits of healthy relationships.

A Family Works staff member co-facilitated the Loves-Me-Not programme for a group of Year 13 students at Papamoa College. This programme was developed to help students focus on healthy relationships and learn how to identify abusive behaviour.

Meanwhile, principals and staff at 12 schools in the Te Puke and Maketu area have been trained by Family Works



to recognise the signs of abuse and given tools to respond appropriately. The training is part of their plan to become "It's Not OK" violence-free schools.

In Whakatane, Family Works participated again in "Heart to Heart", a family fun day hosted by the Presbyterian Church to link people with community agencies. And the third annual "Yeah, Nah, It's Not OK" song quest is now underway. This contest sees teenagers writing original songs with an anti-violence message to perform live on stage in August.

LOVE IS... A SET OF COLOURED PENS



Stressed parents... tired and restless children. It's a familiar picture for Family Works Waitakere budgeter Linda Hamilton.

Some of the families she sees for budgeting advice have young children who need to be kept occupied while she spends time with Mum or Dad.

Linda does what she can with the meagre resources she has, but would love to be able to provide more art materials, a play mat, games, toys, books, puzzles and children's furniture.

In fact, most Family Works sites are short of fun and interactive resources for our children's counselling services. Your donation for this purpose would help us create a welcoming place where children can deal with the emotions they are experiencing.

ANGEL CAKE BAKE-OFF REMINDER

It's not too late to register for our Angel Cake Bake-Off this month. Join others who are raising funds for Family Works by baking and selling sweet treats. Register at www.fwn.org.nz/bake. If you'd just like to make a donation instead, please fill out the enclosed form.

GOOD NEIGHBOURS

We're very grateful to a number of companies for lending their support to Family Works:

- Return to Sender Caskets and the Mt Roskill Collision Centre have signed on as Business Angels. Both are located near Family Works at the Leslie Centre.

- Whiteware company Magness Benrow donated a second-hand fridge freezer to store food at the Onehunga Cooperating Parish for our Foodbank.

If your business or organisation is keen to support vulnerable people in your local community, we'd love to hear from you. **Contact Giselle Attard at 09 520 8632 or email giselle.attard@psn.org.nz**